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AS A WHOLE the elections represent an astounding confirmation of the personal popularity of President Roosevelt, and a vindication of liberalism as against the die-hard conservatism of the Republicans. For despite its frequent betrayals of the workers in connection with Section 7-a and the recent tie-up with the bankers, the American public has looked upon the Roosevelt Administration as distinctly liberal. The vote demonstrates that with all of the weaknesses of the New Deal only a small minority would like to go back to the halcyon days of the '20s. In general, however, the character of the candidates elected is not such as to inspire confidence in a further trend toward progressivism in the Democratic Party. Among the supporters of the New Deal elected to the Senate were such irresponsible politicians as Copeland of New York, Guffey of Pennsylvania, and Moore of New Jersey. As we go to press, the fate of Bronson Cutting of New Mexico, one of the most able members of the Senate, remains in doubt. On the other hand, there is genuine cause for rejoicing in the striking triumph of the new Progressive Party in Wisconsin, putting both the La Follettes back into office, as well as in the splendid victory of Governor Olson and Senator Shipstead in Minnesota. If the independent parties in these two States can get together, it is possible that they may yet grow into an effective national third-party movement. In other sections of the country, however, there is no evidence of a growth of an intelligent radicalism. While the vote for the minor parties has been recorded in only a few instances, it has been almost incredibly low. Running against two such nonentities as Copeland and Cluett, Norman Thomas was able to obtain only 130,000 votes in New York City, out of over 1,600,000. In Bridgeport, the Socialists succeeded in electing a few representatives to the State legislature, but this victory is rendered less significant by the notorious conservatism of the Bridgeport Socialists. In light of the present election, there seems little doubt that the American people want a change—a "new deal"; but their discontent has yet to find effective or intelligent political channels.

THE DEFEAT OF UPTON SINCLAIR in California, after one of the nastiest campaigns on record, shows what will happen to any radical who attempts to challenge the existing order through the medium of an old-party machine. A great tide of discontent in California carried Mr. Sinclair triumphantly through the primaries and into the arms of Mr. George Creel and the Postmaster General. But when his strength became really formidable and when it became plain that although he had modified his EPIC somewhat for the sake of Mr. Creel's delicate sensibilities, he was still offering a direct challenge to California big business, the dogs began to howl and Mr. Creel and "Jim" ran for cover as fast as they could. The Merriam forces did not spare any of the dirtier political devices to defeat the EPIC candidate. They attacked Mr. Sinclair on all fronts, and adduced quotations from his writings to show him as a menace to the family, the church, and the home. And the Administration at Washington turned from friendliness to repudiation almost overnight. The EPIC program was positive enough, but it was backed, not by an electorate thoroughly grounded in Socialist principles, but by a general feeling of dissatisfaction with the status quo, which was not strong enough to put Mr. Sinclair into office. He made a magnificent campaign, and we regret his defeat, but we cannot believe the battle lost. Perhaps a clear-cut triumph for lawlessness and reaction will in the end do more to arouse the people of California than a Sinclair victory would have done. The economic weaknesses of the EPIC plan are serious and might have proved embarrassing to the radical movement. The weakness of the present system, supported by the terrorism of the Republican administration, will become more glaringly apparent every month. Merriam's victory may prove to have been too dearly bought.

THE SEVENTEENTH ANNIVERSARY of the Bolshevik Revolution finds the Soviet Union in a position to enjoy the rewards of years of sacrifice in the building of an industrial economy. Both in agriculture and in industry the record of the past twelve months has been unusually satisfactory. Despite the serious drought in the spring, government grain collections have been completed far earlier

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than in any previous year and compare favorably in quantity with those gathered in the record harvest of 1933. With over 80 per cent of Russia's 25,000,000 peasant households now on collective farms, guided by experienced party workers affiliated with the tractor stations, the Soviets' troublesome agrarian problem seems to be a thing of the past. In heavy industry production was within 2 per cent of the plan for the first nine months of the year. The Soviet Union has displaced Germany as second in the world in the production of pig iron; in the output of steel and rolled metal it is surpassed only by Germany and the United States. These gains have been accompanied by encouraging progress toward overcoming the perennial problems of waste and labor inefficiency. During the first eight months of 1934 the costs of production were lowered 5 per cent, while labor productivity was increased 11.8 per cent. Moreover, the reduced threat of war and the lessening of the strain in the economic sphere have been followed by a corresponding easing of political tension, as evidenced by the abolition of the O. G. P. U. and the enfranchisement of ex-priests, ex-kulaks, and other former class enemies who have demonstrated their loyalty to the Soviet state. Viewed as a whole, the Soviets can well afford the two days taken in celebration of the year's achievements.

THAT ENGLAND has regained political as well as economic normalcy was demonstrated by the sweeping gains made by the Labor Party in the recent municipal elections. The victory was even more decisive than that of last March when Labor captured the London County Council for the first time, or that of the municipal elections of a year ago. Out of 1,300 contests the Laborites gained 740 seats. In London itself Labor now controls fifteen of the twenty-eight boroughs, one more than its previous high peak. Outside the city it won forty-one towns from the Municipal Reformers (Conservatives) and regained all of the ground lost in the 1931 debacle. Although national questions played little or no part in the campaign, the issues bore a striking resemblance to those which divide the parties in the national sphere. The Municipal Reform Party charged Labor with undue extravagance, particularly in its various slum-clearance projects and social-welfare work. Labor did not deny that the expenditures had been heavy, but was able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the electorate that the money had been well spent. Coming as it does immediately after two decisive victories in parliamentary by-elections, this most recent success indicates definitely that the tide of public opinion is still running strongly against the Conservatives, and suggests that Labor's dream of a clear majority at the next general election may not be wholly fanciful. Nor is the passage, on November 2, of the sedition bill, which imposes severe restrictions on the traditional British liberties, likely to enhance the popularity of the rapidly disintegrating National Government.

SCORNED ALIKE by the coal operators and the intrenched United Mine Workers of America and totally ignored by the National Labor Relations Board, members of the dual union, the Anthracite Miners of Pennsylvania, have again taken up the weapon of direct action to defend their right to recognition. Labor strife which has been smoldering for many weeks in the hard-coal area around Wilkes-Barre flared up again recently in a series of pitched battles between the rival unions, and the threatened general strike does not now seem to be far off. Scores have been injured in the factional hand-to-hand fighting which was forced upon the insurgent miners as they picketed the Susquehanna Collieries at Nanticoke in protest against the dismissal of twelve union members, allegedly for union activity. That they are defying not only their traditional enemies, the operators, but also the whole "majority-rule" conception of the federal government's labor agencies, has apparently not dissuaded them from their action. Through its anthracite conciliator the National Labor Board ruled that operators could not enter into contracts with the Anthracite Miners' union so long as contracts with the United Mine Workers existed. These contracts are presumably based on the older union's claims of majority representation. But the rebels assert that they are now in a majority in the Wilkes-Barre area and are willing to let a referendum settle the whole troublesome business. The referendum, however, has been refused on the ground that the Anthracite Miners are not abiding by the conciliator's decision that they are not to be recognized. This vicious circle must be broken if further bloodshed is to be averted, and the way to break it is for the federal government to step in and hold the election.

THE COURSE OF THE ADMINISTRATION now seems clearly set for heavy spending if there is no "natural" business revival by next summer. A conflict has been waged for months to win the President to this approach. The "spending school" did not envisage the present trial period for business, and would have preferred to start now with a program putting the unemployed to work. The President, however, felt it wiser to make such peace as he might with business interests and test the truth of predictions that a sound revival would come by the late spring if only business were given certain specific assurances. He gave a few of these, notably that he would not launch a central bank, would make deposit insurance a not intolerable burden to the banks, and would iron out economic incongruities from the NRA. He will maintain a certain volume of "pump-priming" expenditure. At the same time he is taking measures to strengthen the structure of mortgage finance, next to the banks the most important sector in our financial economy. This, however, is only a provisional program, and is given to the country together with news of a PWA five-year program costing $12,000,000,000. There is nothing definite about this, only the general statement that $7,000,000,000 would go for non-liquidating projects, the remainder for low-cost housing. Obviously, the President will not decide about it now. He might choose to proceed with the first year's portion, $2,400,000,000, when he makes up his budget in December. Probably he will put off any action until just before Congress adjourns in June. For by then the "natural" theory of revival can be measured by the facts.

THE "SPENDING SCHOOL" had originally thought in still vaster sums—as much as $5,000,000,000 a year for five years. The magic was not to be in the five-year idea, reminiscent of Russian planning! The idea was that spending cannot have full psychological influence if the community does not know that more money lies waiting after the year's appropriation is exhausted. Much of the spending so far has not been stimulating because it was patchy, and the busi-

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ness community felt it would not have a lasting effect. The reduction from $25,000,000,000 to $12,000,000,000 has been made not with an eye on economy but on the idle resources of the banks, which are calculated to amount to the smaller figure. The Treasury Department apparently is considering long-term bonds as the eventual way to finance the program, and hopes to borrow most of this money at present low interest rates, though in the last of the five years, if revival is in progress and money is in demand, the cost of government borrowing will increase. It is not certain how many persons can be put to work in a year by the expenditure of $2,400,000,000. At $1,200 a man, the number is 2,000,000, and if the Keynes theory is correct, for every man directly given employment another man, perhaps even two men, find work. That would be 4,000,000 jobs at least, but not more than 6,000,000. Unless such spending produces revival all around, it will not solve unemployment. We still shall have to count on supplementary methods to replace direct relief. Ultimately the spending school wants to do away with unemployment insurance on a large scale and take up the slack in business with an elastic public-works program, kept in being for the purpose. This conception will not make smooth going in the next Congress for an unemployment-insurance program which needs for success, first of all, a profound conviction that it is essential to the continuance of American civilization.

THE PREVAILING political winds are blowing through American university halls with increasing force; and there is no doubt that the conflict between reaction and radicalism on the college campus is growing sharper day by day. At the College of the City of New York, where the student body has for years been notably independent in its thinking, there has been a continuous round of protests, suspensions, picket lines, and arrests, followed by further protests, ever since a group of Italian students, who were clearly representatives of Mussolini's fascist state, were received with university honors by the college authorities. The resentment of the student body reached a climax in the declaration of "Oust Robinson Week," in the course of which eighteen students were arrested for picketing the home of President Frederick B. Robinson.

OUT WEST, where everything, including repression of free speech, is a little stronger, five students, four of them important student officers, were suspended from the University of California at Los Angeles for radical activities in connection with the National Student League. The particular issue was the determination of the student body to run an open forum free from faculty domination, in this instance a forum on the California campaign. It is significant that all the students suspended were of high scholastic standing. It is perhaps also significant that the student vigilantes who soon afterward began patrolling the campus with the avowed intention of driving out radicalism "with force if necessary" were recruited from among athletes. The Los Angeles affair was taking on all the aspects of a reign of terror, and Provost Ernest C. Moore had already sought the well-known last refuge of the scoundrel by appealing to all universities to "become active helpers of the United States in its day of difficulty," when President Robert Gordon Sproul, who heads both the Berkeley and the Los Angeles branch of the university, arrived to make a personal inquiry, after which four of the five were reinstated. Meanwhile the University of Santa Clara has announced the expulsion of the editor of the campus weekly for publishing an anti-war editorial. The American college student seems to be in a fair way to learning a few of the facts of life.

THE MOST RECENT COMMUNIQUES from the German church-front indicate that the repulse suffered by the Nazis in their attempt to "coordinate" the Protestant churches has been turned into a complete rout. On three separate occasions Hitler postponed receiving Reichsbishop Müller, to whom he was to have given the oath of loyalty to the *Führer,* and it is now an open question whether Müller will ever formally be taken into the official family. A few days later Dr. August Jäger, the Reichsbishop's legal adviser and right-hand man, was summarily removed from all of his various offices. This was followed on October 30 by Hitler's reception of Bishops Meiser and Wurms, the two deposed leaders of the insurgent "Independent Confessional Church," and their restoration to office. While these concessions have fully reconciled the small group of churchmen who are organized in the pro-Nazi German Christian Society—who also found Dr. Jäger more than they could stomach—they have by no means healed the breach in the Protestant church. It is highly possible, however, that Hitler may swallow the last vestige of his pride, admit his defeat, and turn the church back to the clergy. But embarrassing as all this must be to him personally, there is little reason to believe that the conflict has seriously undermined Hitler's position. From the outset the insurgents have made it quite clear that theirs was a fight for ecclesiastical, not for political liberty.

THE BATTLE OF ALBANY, one of the more sanguinary episodes in the War of the Depression, in which policemen used their clubs so freely on a hundred hunger marchers that eleven of the marchers had to be carried off to the hospital, has resulted in a few sober second thoughts on the part of local and State officials. Governor Lehman announced, after hundreds of protests had reached him, that "peaceful and orderly assembly and petition" would be permitted. Major John A. Warner, Superintendent of State Police, offered the protestants trucks—which they refused—to take them back to New York City. And the Mayor and Acting Mayor of Albany made haste to explain that the marchers had started the fight and the poor beleaguered policemen had merely acted in self-defense. Until we have more convincing proof than the word of the police themselves that the row was begun by the marchers, we prefer to believe the affair merely another of those occasions in which the police lost their heads and a group which intended to make a perfectly lawful protest to the proper officials got theirs bloodied by night sticks. A similar affray took place in Denver on the very same day and under almost the same circumstances. The staff correspondent of the New York *Herald Tribune* reports, without any documentation, that "most of the marchers were Communists." Whether they were or not before the battle took place, it is likely that most of them are now. There is probably nothing more nicely calculated to make a Communist out of a relief protestant than a head which has felt the force of a policeman's club.

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President Butler and Fascism

THE NATION has received the following communication from President Butler, denying the charges contained in the article Fascism at Columbia University, printed in *The Nation* last week:

A reading of the anonymous article in *The Nation* of November 7, to which my attention is directed by your letter of October 30, makes it plain that *The Nation* has been imposed upon. This article is one more exhibition of the prevailing tendency to persecute, even maliciously, anyone whose opinions or supposed opinions differ from those of the writer. The article is a curious hodge-podge of falsehood, misrepresentation, and half-truth, with the result that it ends in utter nonsense.

No member of Columbia University is ever questioned as to either his political opinions or his religious beliefs. These are matters for himself alone. The university concerns itself with character, scholarship, teaching power, and personality. There is not now and never has been any attempt on the part of the distinguished scholars, so recognized on either side of the Atlantic, who are responsible for the conduct of the university's work in all that relates to Italy to discriminate against anyone, either teacher, student, or visitor, because of his political opinions, which, indeed, are usually unknown. On the contrary, these scholars have promptly declined every suggestion that action of this sort be taken when made to them from sources outside the university.

The Casa Italiana, which is the generous gift of men and women of Italian origin living in New York, is wholly without political purpose or significance. In this respect it does not differ one iota from Schermerhorn Hall, the scientific laboratory building upon which it looks. The Casa Italiana is admirably equipped for the study and teaching of all that relates to Italy and its civilization—the history and geography of the country, the language and the literature and the art of its people, together with their social, economic, and political institutions as these have developed through the centuries. In all that concerns scholarly endeavor it stands to Italy in precisely the same relationship that the Maison Française stands to France, the Deutsches Haus to Germany, the Casa de las Españas to Spain, and the coming Japanese House to Japan.

The article to which you direct my attention mentions the names of Count Sforza and Senator Croce, both of whom are my warm personal friends and constant correspondents. Count Sforza, a distinguished European statesman of high rank and large experience, has often visited us on Morningside Heights and will soon do so again. If his engagements permit he will certainly speak at the Casa Italiana within a few weeks. Senator Croce, who is the outstanding philosophical mind of this generation, has frequently been invited to Columbia but has not been able to accept our invitations. Only within the last few days has he finally decided that he cannot arrange to come to the United States in the near future, on the invitation of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, in order to address the American Historical Association on the occasion of its annual meeting at Washington in December next. Had Senator Croce been able to accept that invitation, he certainly would have spoken at Columbia both to our students of philosophy and to those of Italian.

Senator Guglielmo Ferrero, whose name is also mentioned in this article, was invited by the director of the Casa Italiana in person to speak at the Casa, but was compelled to decline to do so. Signor Ferrero, however, accepted an invitation to lunch here as the guest of the Casa Italiana and met a number of members of the university faculties.

The Casa Italiana has entertained in its rooms Jews and Catholics, fascists and non-fascists in large numbers. No inquiry has ever been made as to the political beliefs of any one of these guests. Among the well-known anti-fascists who have recently received prolonged hospitality at Casa Italiana are Signor Max Ascoli and his wife. Signor Ascoli is now a professor at the New School of Social Research.

Professor Arthur Livingston, to whom reference is made, is one of our most valued scholars, and has for some years been classed as a member of the Department of Romance Languages with the group in French rather than with the group in Italian for budgetary reasons only, and without the slightest reference to any political opinions that he may hold. At the moment he is directing the work of candidates for the degree of doctor of philosophy whose major subject of study is Italian, and he is carrying to completion a translation of the monumental work of the outstanding Italian social philosopher, Pareto.

The Department of Italian at Columbia as now constituted has been in the habit of recommending for appointment to professorships of Italian in other institutions outstanding scholars, always because of their fitness and without any regard whatever to the fact that they might have publicly made anti-fascist declarations. One scholar, in particular, who was appointed not long ago to a professorship elsewhere on the recommendation of our department was a signer of Senator Croce's well-known manifesto.

The Nation's anonymous contributor is singularly misinformed as to the director of the Casa Italiana. When Professor Prezzolini first came to Columbia more than ten years ago as a member of the staff of the Summer Session, it was Professor Livingston who had suggested and urged his appointment because of his reputation in Europe as an outstanding scholar and man of letters. Those who supported this proposal were assailed at that time for having invited to this country so conspicuous an anti-fascist as Professor Prezzolini. When Professor Prezzolini was named director of the Casa Italiana, he occupied the distinguished post of chief of the literary section and of the information section of the Institute of International Cooperation of the League of Nations at Geneva. It may be of some interest to know that he was elected to that post by the votes of all the members of the League of Nations with the exception of Italy and Paraguay.

I can only repeat that *The Nation* has been imposed upon by a contributor who fails to accept public responsibility for his misstatements. My answer to your question is that Dr. Butler will not act for the convincing reason that there is nothing for him to act upon.

[Signed] NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER

The Nation received President Butler's letter with mingled feelings of satisfaction and sorrow: satisfaction because the letter itself is a complete refutation of the charge that *The Nation* has been imposed upon; sorrow because it is clear that Dr. Butler has been grossly deceived by subordi-

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nates in whom he has apparently trusted. Dr. Butler has been imposed upon, not *The Nation*. Despite its sweeping denials and general assertions, Dr. Butler's letter with its numerous irrelevancies fails to answer or even to mention many of the specific points made in the article on Fascism at Columbia University and the editorial which accompanied it in last week's *Nation*. Among these are the following:

1. That the Casa Italiana has refused to permit in its publications any opinion at variance with fascist doctrine.

2. That such noted Italian liberals as Count Sforza and Professor Salvemini have never been invited to speak at the Casa whatever visits any of them may have made to the university.

3. That Professor Prezzolini, director of the Casa and former liberal journalist, in 1933 announced outspoken support of Mussolini and fascism.

4. That Professor Riccio's dissertation linking Prezzolini and the *Voce* movement to fascism was "fraudulent in conception and execution and could not have borne the imprimatur of a university unless special pressure was at work."

5. That Prezzolini was aware of the purpose and nature of this dissertation and aided in its publication. (Here let us state that we have learned that the printing of Professor Riccio's scandalous dissertation was subsidized by the Casa Italiana.)

6. That Professor Riccio was secretary of the committee in charge of arrangements for the recent visit of the Italian university students to this country and that on October 23 he received a medal from the Italian government for his services in its behalf.

7. That an intimate association and regular correspondence exist between the Italian Embassy at Washington, the Italian Consul-General's office in New York, the office of the *Fasci all' Estero* of Rome, and the Casa Italiana.

8. That student gatherings for the purpose of discussing fascist rule are forbidden at the Casa.

9. That the real purpose of the Casa educational bureau is to carry on fascist propaganda among the Italian American population of New York.

10. That the Consul-General's office last year gave $3,000 to the Casa, and that the Italian government originally donated most of the furnishings.

11. That the *Italy-America Monthly,* the official publication of the Casa, is frankly fascist in character, that it has not once carried a controversial article in its nine months of existence, and that its leading article has consistently been written by Beniamino de Riti, a fascist propagandist who is not affiliated with Columbia University.

Let us now deal specifically with the denials and counter-charges contained in Dr. Butler's letter.

1. The reason for the anonymity of the article will be obvious to anyone who understands the methods employed by fascist agents and organizations. The identity of the author is known to *The Nation,* his reliability is beyond question, and he is prepared to accept responsibility for his statements if any legal challenge is offered.

2. Dr. Butler calls the fascist professors mentioned in the article "distinguished scholars, so recognized on either side of the Atlantic." Professor Riccio's dissertation would hardly entitle him to this rank. His dissertation has been sharply attacked as a miserable fraud. (See Professor Gaetano Salvemini's article in the Belgian review *Res Publica,* December, 1932, Brussels, and the pamphlet issued last year by Carlo Rossi and Antonio Marchi, "An Academic Scandal at Columbia University.") Has Dr. Butler ever read either the dissertation or the pamphlet which demolishes it?

3. To say, as Dr. Butler does, that the Casa "is wholly without political purpose or significance" is merely to substitute an ideal for a fact. In 1926 the Italian consuls in the United States were designated as lieutenants of Il Duce himself, and all persons of Italian origin living in America were placed under their direct orders and absolute obedience was demanded of them. The Casa Italiana has been and is subject to the orders of the Italian Consul-General in New York through its director Giuseppe Prezzolini, who is still an Italian subject. All its "splendid physical resources" have been, with the exception of the Paterno Library which is a part of the university library system, exclusively controlled by the fascist group. Thus the Casa Italiana bears no similarity to Schermerhorn Hall or the Maison Française.

4. *The Nation's* contributor did not question the personal relationships existing between Count Sforza, Senator Croce, Guglielmo Ferrero, and Dr. Butler, or the fact that Count Sforza has "visited us on Morningside Heights." The article did not imply that either Columbia University as a whole or President Butler as an individual was fascist. The fact remains that, in spite of Dr. Butler's friendship and his undoubted influence at Columbia, not one of these distinguished gentlemen has ever spoken at the Casa Italiana. To say that Count Sforza will speak there in the future and that Senator Croce "certainly would have spoken . . . to students of Italian" had he come to Columbia, raises the question of Dr. Butler's speculative powers. It is our guess that, in the future, the Casa will think it wise to include a few non-fascists among its speakers, if any is willing to accept.

5. Dr. Butler asserts that Guglielmo Ferrero was invited to speak at the Casa Italiana by Prezzolini. If so, *The Nation's* article was in error on this point. However, he did not speak. Nor did the Casa Italiana, as Dr. Butler claims, invite Signor Ferrero to luncheon during his visit to Columbia. Professor Prezzolini, acting as an individual, invited Ferrero to a luncheon at the Faculty Club which was attended by "a number of members of the university faculties." This luncheon was not even under the auspices of the Casa.

6. *The Nation's* contributor did not state that either Jews or Catholics were excluded from the Casa. But what anti-fascists have been "recently" entertained there? Professor and Mrs. Ascoli were housed there for three weeks in 1931, two years before Professor Prezzolini became an avowed fascist. Dr. Ascoli's letter to *The Nation,* although revealing a regrettable error of fact, reveals also his clear understanding of the political nature of the Casa.

7. Count Facchetti-Guiglia, a leader among Italians of fascist sympathies in New York, made a speech at a banquet at the Hotel Commodore in 1927 to raise money for the Casa. He denounced Professor Arthur Livingston as an anti-fascist, and stated that no money for the Casa would be forthcoming from Italian Americans sympathetic to fascism until Professor Livingston's connection with the Casa and the Italian Department should be severed. If Professor Livingston was transferred to the French Department for "budgetary reasons only," shortly after Facchetti-Guiglia's speech, the coin-

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cidence seems strange indeed. In any case, we should like an explanation of the "budgetary reasons" for Dr. Livingston's removal from the Italian Department. Might they not be related to the fact that places had to be made for two additional professors: Riccio, author of the dissertation on Prezzolini, and Prezzolini, director of the Casa?

8. Dr. Butler also states that Prezzolini was brought to Columbia by Professor Livingston and not by Professor Bigongiari. If this is so, *The Nation's* investigator was misled by public declarations to the contrary made by Professors Bigongiari and Riccio and others at the Casa on numerous occasions.

9. Dr. Butler's reference to Prezzolini as "so conspicuous an anti-fascist" must seem more humorous to us than to the director of the Casa himself. Prezzolini was indeed considered an anti-fascist—ten years ago when he first visited Columbia—but later he changed his allegiance and came out in support of the dictatorship of Mussolini, and permitted—even aided—the publication of Riccio's dissertation, which had as its purpose the reconstructing of Prezzolini's past to make it appear as a forerunner of fascism. "The Threshold of Fascism" was the title of the work. Prezzolini cannot have it both ways; since he has chosen the fascist interpretation of his life's work, we have a right to ask that President Butler do the same.

The charges made in *The Nation's* article last week were sound. The fascist control of the Casa Italiana is beyond dispute. It is a matter of grave public concern when even a single department of a great American university is controlled by representatives or adherents of a foreign dictatorship and its activities turned to partisan political ends. President Butler has refused to act. He asserts that "there is nothing for him to act upon." We have no doubt that the information he received from the "distinguished scholars" in the Italian Department only served to fortify his natural belief in their integrity and academic standing. We ask him again, most earnestly, to go behind these returns and check the facts for himself. There are impartial scholars at Columbia who could tell him the truth. If he does not care to find it out, there are others who do; undoubtedly the Congressional Committee on Un-American Activities would be happy to investigate the relations of the Casa and the Fascist Government. But that should not be necessary. Columbia should be able to clear its own name.

End of the Labor Truce

THE strike movement, after subsiding for several weeks following the "settlement" of the cotton-textile walkout, has resumed its upward course. Swept along by the butchers and meat-cutters, the retail clerks have awakened from their petit-bourgeois slumbers and are driving home recognition claims against the Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company. The Paterson silk workers are engaged anew in the conflict which started last year with the promulgation of the several textiles codes. In both the automobile and the steel industry the labor boards remain perched on quietly smoldering volcanoes which are likely to erupt at the first stirring of seasonal revival.

Thus the forces of labor militancy called into being by the Recovery Act continue to operate with undiminished vigor. Despite the President's plea for an industrial truce, despite the continual short-circuiting of strikes by an A. F. of L. leadership which has delivered its mind and will to the Administration, despite the spinning by the National Labor Relations Board of excellent theories which the Department of Justice refuses to enforce—despite these and many other paralyzing factors, organized labor's militant spirit will not down. Each new repression, far from subduing it, merely serves to quicken it over a wider area. It is clear by now—so clear that the rank and file of American labor can no longer be in doubt—first, that the President will not move to disturb the status quo in industrial relations unless driven to do so by labor pressure from below; second, that the various labor boards, although fertile in theories concerning rights and duties under Section 7-a, are powerless to compel anti-union employers to grant union recognition; and, third, that the Department of Justice will remain supine no matter how frequently and how flagrantly the statute may be violated.

A year and a half has now passed since the Recovery Act took effect, and the Administration has made no effective move to redeem the pledge of Section 7-a. The President charmed all ears with pleas for peace, but when called into direct action, he brought about sterile and specious settlements in three major conflicts—captive mines, automobiles, iron and steel. The labor boards, except for the automobile board and the first cotton-textile board, took the statute in dead earnest, construed it at face value in a long series of decisions, ran into a blank wall of non-compliance, and were brought to a pause. The Department of Justice refused to act on violation after violation: witness the Harriman and Houde cases. When it did act, for the one and only time, in the Weirton case, it bungled horribly on the first try; none of its labor experts, apparently, took the trouble to familiarize themselves with the Anti-Injunction Act.

It can be readily understood, therefore, why organized labor should once again resort to strikes. The government cannot or will not act to force organized industry into dealing with organized labor. Labor must turn, then, to *force majeure* as the only alternative. This not only has merits as a prime weapon of direct pressure upon employers, but it also has merits as a tactical maneuver calculated to drive the Administration, willy-nilly, into attempts to enforce the statute and to coax new and improved legislation out of Congress—if Section 7-a needs improvement.

The two most recent outbursts of labor unrest—the strikes of the retail clerks and of the silk workers—are symbols and portents at the same time. The retail clerks' strike indicates that the germ of union organization has now infected a class of workers previously believed immune to such a distinctly proletarian disease. The silk workers' strike indicates that code-making is an exploded panacea for labor troubles; the NRA still stews today, as it did in the summer of 1933, in the original mess of the cotton, rayon, and silk codes. Both strikes are portents of upheavals in automobiles and steel.

The government has made no move either to relieve the automobile workers of their Labor Board incubus or to rectify the original automobile code with its "equitable adjustment" of super-minimum wages, its tricky averaging of

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maximum hours, and the infamous "individual merit" clause. Both the settlement of March 25 and the existing code provisions are here to stay—unless upset by direct action. The Steel Labor Board has moved tactfully so far, as if to cajole the employers into union recognition, but all to no avail. It will be the old story. The board will issue decisions favorable to union recognition, the employers will ignore them, perhaps a Blue Eagle or two may flap away, and the Department of Justice will tie itself into knots finding reasons why it should not prosecute. When Judge Stacy remarked that "power is never surrendered; it is always taken away," he gave expression to a doctrine which the steel workers are likely soon to act upon. What the steel workers know—what all workers have come to know—is that by refraining from strikes they merely entangle themselves in the machinery of the "national run-around."

The Saar Plebiscite

MARSHAL PETAIN'S recent declaration that the French army must be prepared to act in the event of a Nazi putsch in the Saar Basin is but one of many indications of increasing tension throughout Western Europe as the date of the plebiscite approaches. All sorts of rumors are afloat. It is said in some quarters that Hitler intends to seize control of the Saar before the plebiscite can be held. More authentic reports presented before the League in October declare that the Nazis are planning to march into Saarbrücken immediately after the vote is taken on January 13 and before the Council can pronounce on the result. Still others assert that the Reich will act only in case it is thwarted in the election, but that it will brook no postponement in the reestablishment of German rule in the Saar should the plebiscite turn out favorably for the Reich.

Irrespective of the truth of these various rumors, there can be no question that the Nazis are straining every effort to obtain a decisive pro-German vote. It is felt that even a large minority against return to Germany would be a serious blow to Nazi prestige, since it would lead to inevitable comparisons between the results of the plebiscites in the Third Reich and the result in a German country where the vote is free. Hundreds of thousands of marks are being expended on every conceivable form of propaganda to emphasize the historical, racial, and economic ties between the Saar and the fatherland. Although barred by law, Nazi storm troopers are said to be pouring into the region, alternately resorting to pleas and threats to force the population into line.

The French for their part are almost equally concerned with preventing the adherence of the Saar to Germany. Realizing that only an insignificant minority is likely to vote in favor of joining France, the French government has announced concessions which would make a continuation of League control more attractive. In a memorandum presented before the League Council in September, the late Louis Barthou declared that in case the Saar voted to maintain the status quo it would be possible to modify the existing regime to provide for a greater degree of self-government, and that another opportunity would be provided later, presumably after Hitler's demise, for a vote on the question of returning to Germany. He also asserted that in the event of a pro-League vote France would make arrangements to cede the mines to local residents, while if Germany won, the French would insist on full repayment before surrendering control.

Prior to the rise of Hitler it was a foregone conclusion that the Saar would vote at least nine to one for return to Germany. Today, according to close observers, only from 35 to 40 per cent of the electors are certain to vote for Germany, while from 20 to 25 per cent—including the Socialists and Communists—are sure to vote for the status quo. The vote of the remaining 35 to 45 per cent is doubtful, depending largely on developments in Germany between now and January 13. It is generally recognized that the balance of power lies in the hands of the Catholics, who comprise 70 per cent of the population. The recent strained relations between Hitler and the Vatican have added to the uncertainty, but should a reconciliation take place, the great majority of these votes would unquestionably be cast for Germany.

The chief danger lies in the possibility that the vote will be comparatively close. Under such circumstances it would be easy for either France or Germany to claim fraud. Registrations for the plebiscite are about 200,000 higher than the estimated number of eligible voters, and it has proved difficult to weed out those who have illegally enrolled. Already certain groups in the French government show a disposition to favor resistance to German reoccupation, by force if necessary, in case 30 per cent of the electorate vote for a continuation of League control. And there can be no doubt that a large section of responsible British opinion would support France in such a decision. Unfortunately the Treaty of Versailles itself appears to allow the League a certain amount of discretion in the matter. Article 47 provides that the purpose of the plebiscite is "to make in due time permanent provision for the government of the Saar Basin in accordance with the wishes of the population." The Annex to the Treaty further says: "If, for the whole or part of this territory, the League of Nations decides [on the basis of the plebiscite] in favor of union with Germany, it will be the duty of the League of Nations to cause the German government to be reestablished in the government of the territory specified by the League." This would appear to give the League power to make distinctions in various sections of the Saar, and since France is a dominating factor in the League, it practically amounts to giving France the right to survey the results of the plebiscite and to decide whether the Saar is to be restored in whole or in part.

In such a situation the danger of a Nazi coup is unquestionably great. The putsch, if it occurred, would probably be engineered from within the Saar in a manner to make it appear independent of German direction. But if it called forth French intervention, Germany might well consider such action equivalent to a declaration of war. To prevent such a crisis the League should make full and adequate provision to police the poll without the aid of France, which after all is one of the interested parties. And to clear the atmosphere further, the League Council at its meeting on November 21 should issue a statement making it perfectly plain that the elections will be fairly conducted and that immediate action will be taken to abide by the results, treating the Saar as an indivisible unit. Anything less may have serious repercussions on the peace of Europe.

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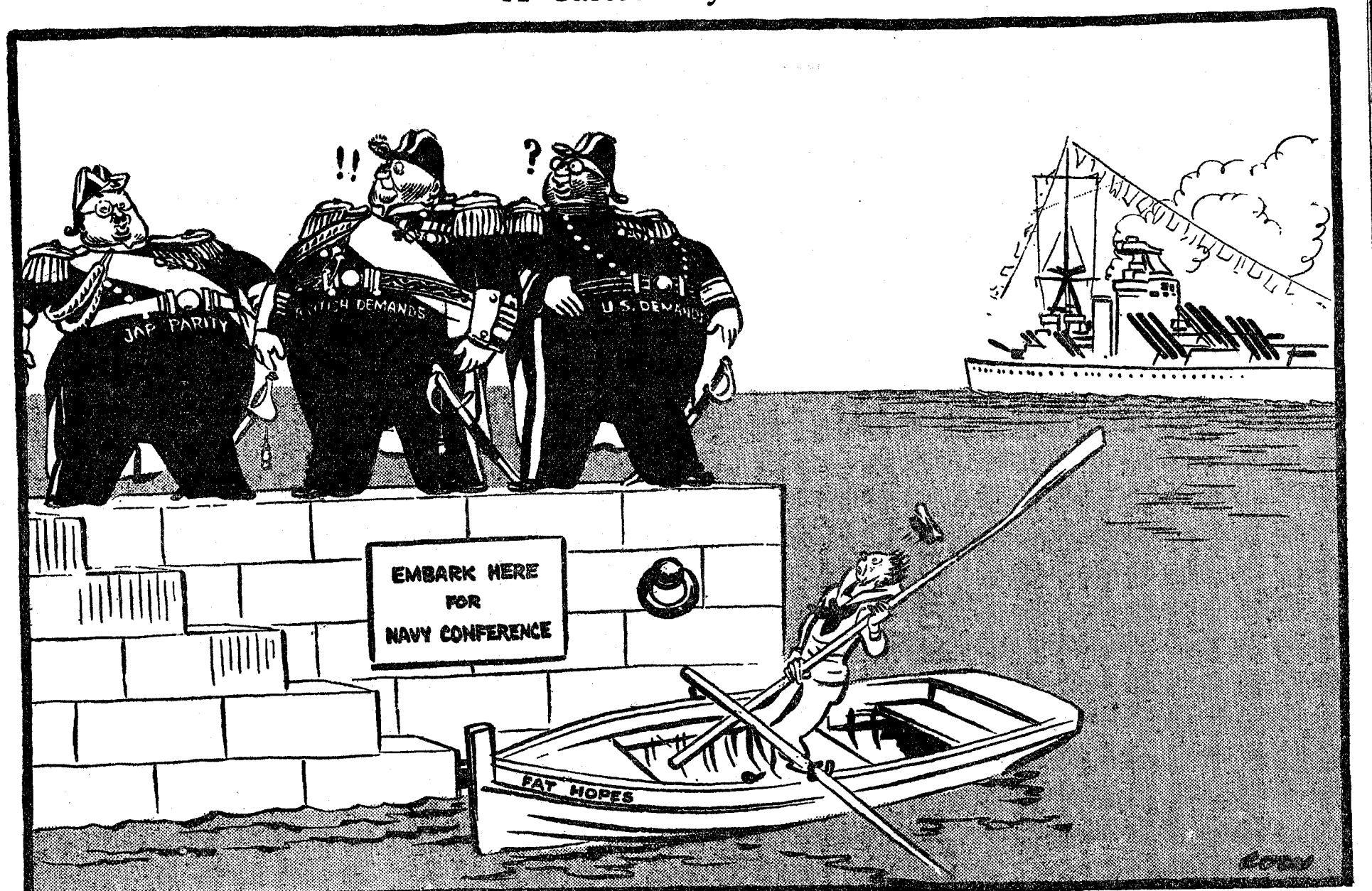
A Cartoon by LOW



TONNAGE PROBLEM

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Issues and Men

Trains and Trains

WHEN I went through the new Union Pacific streamline train which broke the record by coming from Los Angeles to New York City in, roughly, two days and three nights, my memory flashed back to an experience I had two winters ago on a train going from Milwaukee to Rockford, Illinois. It was a two-car train consisting of a combination engine, baggage, and mail car, with a Diesel electric motor, and one passenger coach. The coach rocked so badly that I asked the conductor what was the matter with the roadbed; had it been allowed to run down as much as that? "No," he replied, "the roadbed is fine; the trouble is with the car. It is more than fifty years old." I said I had noticed the coal stoves at each end, and told him that method of heating had been forbidden by law in New York State about thirty years ago because when trains were wrecked so many cars were burned up by the coals scattered from the stoves. He then asked me what had happened to American initiative and enterprise in the railroad field. He had been reading of a fast train between Berlin and Hamburg which covered the ground at the rate of ninety-five miles an hour for at least part of the way. Why could we not do as well in America? I took a sardonic pleasure in pointing out to him that in America rugged individualism and private enterprise still controlled the railroads, while in Germany they had government ownership and operation. It quite stunned him for a moment and then he began to laugh. Afterward he confided to me that he and his associates, who are in direct touch with the traveling public, were constantly making recommendations to their superiors, the operating officials, but that they had not yet received even an acknowledgment of a single one of their suggestions for improving the service.

"We know," he went on, "that if they would give us a train that went seventy miles an hour on this roadbed, with a refreshment bar and comfortable seats, we could beat the private automobile and the automobile truck all to pieces, but I do not suppose now that we shall ever get it." He looked sadly at the few passengers on the train, and I wondered then—as I did when I saw the new Union Pacific flier—whether it was not too late for the railroads to get back their lost traffic. I know all the excuses that the railroad men make, how they are being ground between the upper millstone of the Interstate Commerce Commission, which has "deprived the railroad executives of all initiative," and the nether millstone of the Railroad Brotherhoods, which are "constantly dictating wages without regard to earning capacity." I also know full well the mischief that has been done by New York bankers in dictating the selection as railroad presidents of persons inexperienced in actual railroad management. But I recall innumerable lost opportunities for the speeding up of traffic and the modernization of trains. Indeed, when I looked at that Union Pacific flier I was struck by the fact that, after all, the coaches are just like the standard ones except that they have been compressed. The aisle between the sections is so narrow that I almost touched both elbows as I went through. I saw only one or two new devices for the comfort of passengers. Since no window can be opened, everything depends on air-conditioning. If anything should happen to that system on a hot summer's day the passengers would certainly be hard-boiled when they arrived at their destination!

Then I went back in thought to the train on which, as a small boy, I traveled to the opening of the Northern Pacific Railroad five decades ago. It was composed entirely of private coaches lent by the presidents of the various railroads. One of them, which came from the Baltimore and Ohio, was so rotten that the train broke in two going down the western side of the Rocky Mountains, with the result that the rear part caught the front part and demolished the Baltimore and Ohio car, fortunately without serious injury to anybody. But these private cars, like the Pullman coaches of that day, were hardly different from those of today. Last year at the Chicago Exposition I saw for the second or third time the original Pullman car and marveled again how little real development has taken place since the introduction of sleepers. We still astonish the European traveling public by our refusal to adopt the compartment system. These new Union Pacific Pullmans approximate the compartment idea in that the sections can be shut off more rigidly than is possible in the ordinary curtained sleeper. But when I think of the luxurious first-class sleeping cars on the trains of the Soviet Union I cannot but feel that here again the boasted advantages of rugged individualism over governmental operation are mainly non-existent. There are no such fine cars in the United States.

It is now announced that seven more high-speed streamline trains are to be built as a result of the allotment of federal loans totaling $2,270,000 to five major railroad companies. But meanwhile it does seem as if with the existing roadbeds and existing coaches trains could be speeded up. In 1883 the crack trains on the Northwestern transcontinental roads averaged twenty-five miles an hour. Probably today they do not exceed thirty or thirty-five miles, with the exception of the very fastest. Undoubtedly the cost of coal comes in here. But nothing ventured, nothing won. If the railroads are not going to speed up their trains, as the Union Pacific is now doing, to compete with the airplane and to show a marked superiority in speed and comfort to the private automobile or bus, they must expect to remain far in the rear. Moreover, they should cheapen fares. The English railroads, I notice, are continuing this winter their reduced summer excursion fares. Our American roads do not yet recognize the need of really lowering rates to meet lowered incomes—especially in the dining-cars, where the prices remain outrageously high.

Oswald Garrison Villard

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War Germs in the Danube Basin

I. The Crisis in the Succession States

By OSCAR JASZI

THE five Danubian states which arose from the disintegration of the Hapsburg monarchy are so closely related that no independent Austrian, Hungarian, Czecho-Slovakian, Rumanian, or Jugoslav problem can be said to exist. The future of these people is inseparably joined. Strangely enough, the increasing misery of vast masses of the population, their inability to satisfy their most elementary physical needs, has not led to a sharpening of the class struggle, but rather to an enormous amount of hatred and distrust, the age-old atmosphere for dictatorial domination. I am convinced that the great majority of the people in the new states, with the possible exception of Czecho-Slovakia, are living under such conditions.

Of course the capitals of the states exhibit great splendor and have undergone magnificent development. One sees everywhere new quarters, with palatial buildings. But the provinces often show neglect and misery. Seeing the gigantic new post office in Kosice, an economically stagnant town in Slovakia, the tourist would not suspect that the famine regions of Carpatho-Russia lie only a few hours away. Bucharest has the most luxurious dispensaries; in smaller country towns wounds are dressed with paper for lack of cotton. Among unemployed workers and especially among the landless in the regions of overpopulation, there exists an appalling misery. This destitution has been considerably mitigated, decentralized, so to say, in those countries where a serious land reform has been introduced; but there is real famine in many regions of Hungary, where two-thirds of the people are either landless or living on a plot of from one to two hectares. In the neighborhood of Vienna, during the winter of 1933-34, one-fourth of the children could not go to school in bad weather for lack of clothes, and many of those who went had had no breakfast. But the most crying misery is in Vienna itself. One cannot walk ten steps on the most fashionable streets without meeting old and young men and women, often entire families, begging for alms, half-grown children on their knees supplicating help, even during the night and in pouring rain.

Spiridon Popescu, in a book which was honored by the Rumanian Academy, says that in some parts of his native country a whole family frequently lives in a single damp room and sleeps under a single blanket on the floor, grown-ups and children, healthy and sick together. The most elementary cleanliness is unknown. In some Jugoslav villages a box of matches is regarded as a treasure, and sometimes families join in keeping up their hearth fires in order to save this coveted symbol of modern civilization. I was told by reliable persons that often in a large village one could not find as much as a thousand dinars (about $23) in cash. But the situation is far worse in Hungary. One reads in a conservative magazine that in 1932 the income of a gainfully employed agricultural worker's family—a happy category among the unemployed majority—provided each member with about 12 to 14 fillers a day, or about 3.6 to 4.8 cents. The tragic suicide-strikers at Pecs were almost aristocrats in this land of paupers. One reads in another paper that there are great numbers of persons in villages who do not cook during entire weeks in winter, whose only nourishment is dry corn, who go to bed at five o'clock in the afternoon and sleep until nine o'clock in the morning in order not to freeze, and who search diligently for cabbage stalks. Similar misery exists among the unemployed industrial workers. The luxurious metropolis of Budapest is surrounded by the mansions of modern troglodytes, while many thousands of abandoned children are vagrant on its streets. For the disreputable job of state hangman there was a fierce competition, among the many candidates being two women and several university graduates.

Perhaps nothing reveals this tragedy more clearly than the infant-mortality figures. In Hungary infant mortality is 18.6 per cent, in Rumania 17.6 per cent, in Carpatho-Russia 19 per cent, and in Slovakia 17 per cent, as compared with 6.5 per cent in England, 7.9 per cent in Germany, and 7.6 per cent in France. The tuberculosis mortality per 10,000 inhabitants is 20 in Hungary, 18.8 in Rumania, 26.6 in Jugoslavia, and 16.8 in Czecho-Slovakia, as against 7.9 in Germany.

In analyzing the causes of this appalling situation, the chief emphasis must naturally be laid upon the evils of economic nationalism, which have become even more aggravated in recent years. The states with developed industries, Austria and Czecho-Slovakia, have established a high protective system for their agricultural products, and the agricultural countries—Hungary, Rumania, and Jugoslavia—have embarked on a program of artificial industrialization. The two groups strangle each other, and a continually growing militarism and bureaucracy compel them to continue this destructive process. Add to this in the lower Danubian states a suffocating atmosphere of corruption, a fatal inheritance from Byzantium. The system of *bakshish*—the old Turkish practice of tipping for public service—has become in Rumania almost a state institution, and the theft of public funds is a serious budgetary problem. These practices create an increasing burden of taxation, and a brutality in financial administration which has become one of the most tragic features of present-day existence. Even in such a highly developed state as Czecho-Slovakia so-called flying tax commissions have been known to appear with large vans before private homes and coffee houses to seize all valuables from the owners and guests as payment for tax arrears.

But far more fundamental than all these symptoms is the growing pressure of agricultural overpopulation. The more backward a territory is, the more rapid the growth of population. Each hundred hectares of land under cultivation must support 64 persons in Austria, 72 in Hungary, 97 in Rumania, and 114 in Jugoslavia. The gravity of this situation will be understood when one bears in mind that in Germany only 52 persons and in France only 48 live on the same amount of land, although the productivity of the

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soil is almost double that in Rumania, Jugoslavia, and parts of Czecho-Slovakia. After the World War the victorious states tried to solve this problem by dismembering the large estates—this was at the same time a nationalistic attack on the alien feudal classes—but achieved no substantial results. The movement failed not only because the growing masses tended to subdivide the newly acquired lands into very small segments, but also because no distribution of land alone could have improved matters without an adequate credit organization, a cooperative movement, and an efficient system of agricultural education.

The economic crisis of the succession states is aggravated by a constitutional one. From a world empire Austria has become a small state, in part a barren mountainous country, with an overdeveloped industry which cannot find markets. Only two real solutions can be imagined: a Danubian federation which would provide an outlet for its industry, commerce, and unrivaled scientific activities, or *Anschluss* with Germany. Vehement nationalistic developments have blocked the first road; the jealousy of France and Italy the second. After the World War the Socialists were faced with a clear-cut choice between a bolshevik dictatorship and a parliamentary democracy. Led by international considerations they chose the second. However, their program was strictly negative. "Austrian Marxism" regarded the state only as an instrument to foster the interest of the proletariat. The red municipality of Vienna did admirable work in building enormous apartment houses and other protective institutions for the working class, chiefly at the expense of the middle classes, but the feudal estates and the banks remained practically undisturbed. These elements allied themselves with the shrewd and powerful forces of Austrian clericalism and the remnants of the old imperial bureaucracy and military cliques, and utilizing the swelling ranks of the intellectual proletariat, became the organizers of the dissatisfied peasantry and middle classes. Socialism lost ground year by year, and the growing tide of fascism and Hitlerism made the hour ripe for a coup d'etat. The bloody suppression of socialism was without doubt demanded by Mussolini, for whom it meant the military *Gleichschaltung* of Italy, Austria, and Hungary. So the new *Ständestaat* was founded, which is in fact a dictatorship like the corporative state of Italy or the National Socialist state of Hitler; its form serves as a façade to deceive Western public opinion.

The Austrian experiment is less fascist than the Italian and the German, since it is without popular ideology and the armed lower middle class plays a far less important role in it. The Austrian regime is rather the reincarnation of the spirit of Metternich, the old alliance between church, army, and bureaucracy. The first article of the new constitution says: "In the name of God, the Almighty, from whom all right emanates, the Austrian people received for their Christian, German Bundesstaat this constitution."

The clever and cultivated priests, bureaucrats, and officers who control this dictatorship abstain from the loud and insipid demagogy of fascism and Nazism. They act in a fascist manner, but they do not advertise their procedure. Though the Jewish intellectual middle class has suffered greatly in Austria, there has been no unnecessary brutality in the "cleansing"; no mob riots have been tolerated, and even the bloody Jew-beating of the young gentlemen of the universities was considerably tempered. Though the new rulers are enthusiastic admirers of the Hapsburg military glory, they are at the same time nice obedient League of Nations men; they even participate in the Pan-Europa movement. They extirpated socialism, but did not considerably diminish the privileges of the working class established by the Socialist regime. They suppressed the freedom of the press entirely, yet there is no open censorship; the chief of the press merely gives telephone "advice" in a mild and cordial tone. As a matter of fact only the restitution of the Hapsburgs could give a logic, a permanency, a moral tone, to this anachronistic system. This is however highly improbable; it is categorically opposed not only by the Little Entente but also by the Hungarian rulers.

However muzzled Austrian socialism may be at the present time, it cannot be doubted that the aspirations of 700,000 organized workers will be in the long run a great factor in the future development of Austria. The blood of its martyrs has given new strength not only to Austrian socialism but to the whole Western labor movement. Had Austrian socialism fallen in the same ignominious way that German socialism fell, there would be no hope for the rebirth of the movement. The pride of this conviction animates the Austrian masses at the present time. It is clear that without the spontaneous participation of the workers the new state will always remain unstable. The government itself is beginning to understand this situation. Vast posters frequently appear on the streets of Vienna urging the workers heartily and beguilingly to join the corporative state and to cooperate with it in restoring prosperity.

Very different is the situation in Hungary, so different that the present regime would protest against even speaking of a constitutional crisis. Only a few months ago Premier Gömbös solemnly asserted: "We are an island of peace in Europe." Indeed, there is a perfect "harmony" in the cruelly mutilated country. The whole political world is united in the patriotic front of revision of the treaties which formed its frontiers. All other serious issues are sleeping, or distorted in the interest of the ruling classes. The parliamentary debates are sham fights, ably managed by the government. The government controls the elections by a strong machinery, by open ballot in the great majority of the constituencies, by a middle class subservient to the state, by rigorous control of the press, and, if necessary, by armed force.

Yet this apparent unity of patriotic public opinion does not deceive any serious observer. The Hungarian constitution is weak, a glittering façade on a feudal structure which is rapidly being transformed for fascist occupancy. When the Karolyi attempt at democratization failed in 1918-19, and when bolshevism was uprooted with the help of Rumanian bayonets, the country was flooded by a wild nationalistic wave which showed a remarkable likeness to the later Nazi movement. It was a movement of an armed lower middle class and of officers who took an indiscriminate bloody revenge against both democracy and bolshevism. But the loud demagogy did not last very long. The awakening Magyars did not possess the dogmatic rigidity or the mystic enthusiasm of their German brethren. Furthermore, with an unorganized and backward peasantry and a pseudo-bourgeoisie, the thousand-year-old feudal structure of the country, allied with a usurious capitalism, was strong enough to maintain itself. Hungary was the only country in Europe in which the feudal system was practically untouched, though

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the landed nobility was made almost bankrupt by the agrarian crisis and has been compelled to surrender a great part of its political leadership to fascist elements—secret military associations and pseudo-gentry intellectuals.

The real leaders of the white counter-revolution, Horthy and Gömbös, are the unchallenged masters of the present situation. Since they have filled every post in the army, the police, and the gendarmerie with their own people, and since they control entirely the administrative government and the judiciary, they no longer need to resort to open terrorism. This is why the able Gömbös repudiated the suggestion of his overlord, Mussolini, to establish a fascist state in Hungary. He does not need a fascist state, because the real ends of fascism are better served through the "thousand-year-old constitution," which is at the same time a nice instrument with which to obtain sympathy from the League and the West. (Perhaps a new loan will ultimately materialize!) And the shrewd neo-fascists of Hungary, knowing very well that Mussolini is a doubtful protector, keep other irons in the fire for German fascism and even for Western liberalism.

It is no wonder that under the duress of these economic and political problems there is widespread fear of a new war. Whereas in 1914 the masses were taken completely by surprise, now there is a general anticipation of new convulsions, the only difference being that radical intellectuals of the left think rather of social upheaval, while people of the middle and the right are expecting nationalistic wars. Perhaps nobody expressed this general nervous tension more clearly to me than a distinguished Czech psychiatrist. "The war is now latent," he said, "because the nations do not yet know who are their friends and who are their enemies. The moment they know, they will begin to cut each other's throats."

[*With the cooperation of the Social Science Research Council of America Dr. Jaszi recently spent several months in the Danube valley and parts of the Balkans investigating conditions in those regions. This article is the first of a series in which he will discuss the economic and political problems of the succession states. The second will appear next week.*]

On Being a Nuisance to Japan

By RAYMOND GRAM SWING

Washington, November 5

THE naval discussions in London have proceeded with a notable absence of propaganda of American origin. The restraint has been deliberate. The State Department wisely chose not to add the pressure of American public opinion to the nearly impossible task of Norman Davis. The Manchoukuo oil incident smacked of familiar imperialist tactics, but the story "broke" in Japan. It was not, as it looked, an attempt to demonstrate to this country that Japanese predominance in Asia is banging shut the open door, and that a big navy is the only possible defense for Standard Oil in the Orient.

But one day soon America probably will read that the naval talks have been "indefinitely postponed," and will be asked to accept the consequences of breakdown without having seen the issues while the talks were in progress. These are fundamental talks. They touch bottom in an important phase of American foreign policy, indeed of America's entire behavior as a great nation.

We are asking Japan to accept continuance of naval inferiority. Japan is asking us to accept naval parity. Our demand is not that Japan should be so weak that we can veto her in Asia. In theory, Britain and the United States ought to be strong enough to do that now. In fact they cannot, as they discovered after the collective denunciation of Japan by the League Assembly, nor can they hope to at the present cost of warships. The inferiority we ask of Japan is not inferior enough to matter much. In the last analysis, we could not expect to win a war from Japan in short order. All we can hope is, without a war, to retard Japanese expansion, and to limit somewhat the Japanese Monroe Doctrine in Asia. Even this is only a hope. Has the strength of the American navy, or of the combined British and American navies, so far restrained Japan on the continent of Asia? No one can answer with certainty. Perhaps it has. Yet for this "perhaps" we pursue our present naval policy, we fight to retain costly battleships and aggressive aircraft carriers, and we allow the military dictators of Japan to tell the Japanese people that we are planning a war.

American policy would be at least intelligible if we were asking effective superiority over Japan. Then we could explain that we have undertaken to be big brother in Asia, and intend to patrol that part of the world, knocking all bullies off the sidewalks and, while cowing them, giving our business interests the inside track. This would be the comprehensible imperialism. Instead, we are playing the far smaller game of being a nuisance to Japan. We agree that we shall not be strong enough to stop her. But we want her to be weak enough perhaps to pause and consider every time she makes a new move in Asia.

Admittedly, this statement of our policy is only part of the story. One must examine the alternatives. The "big brother" policy does not come into consideration, since nobody wants it in America. That leaves only two other possibilities—to sign a naval treaty conceding parity to Japan, or to concede parity in effect simply by dropping treaty control of armaments with Japan.

Signing a treaty containing parity would be like ratifying Japan's Monroe Doctrine in Asia, and it is out so far as the State Department is concerned. It is not in line with our actions so far. We refused to recognize Manchoukuo, and we would refuse to recognize a parity which meant Japanese supremacy in Asia. We might actually tolerate parity, that is, do nothing about it, but we would not sanctify it by signing a treaty. It isn't as though Japan could conceivably become strong enough to menace American security. We are in no danger ourselves. But we are not going to sign away our interests in the Orient in a public ceremonial.

The other choice is to make no treaty at all. Perhaps this is what the State Department foresees, and our claim to a "nuisance" fleet is not meant too seriously. But this is not the impression I am given here. It appears that the nuisance-

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navy conception is taken in earnest. And that would mean that even if there were no treaty, there probably would be official encouragement to build to maintain the five-three ratio. In other words, we are not bluffing in London.

Probably the talks will break down. Britain would like to play that happiest of her roles, the "honest broker," this time between us and the Japanese. But her attention is focused on Europe and the German menace, and the difficulties of maintaining a two-Power standard. Britain does not want to agree to full formal parity for Japan, for then France might claim it, and after France Italy, and after Italy Germany. She has vital interests in Asia, far greater than our own. She owns territory there. Her prestige is involved in a way ours is not, for weakness in China would make her weak in India and wherever her rule is dependent on her subject races believing her strong. Yet since she cannot afford to outbuild Japan or to join us in a victorious war in the Far East, she can only go through the embarrassment of being sweet to Japan, hoping in that way to safeguard Hong Kong and British rights in the treaty ports. Ultimately, too, she wants to wring trade concessions from Japan. The British have little scope for honest brokering.

Japan is expected to renounce the Washington treaty, getting a free hand in building capital ships and aircraft carriers, after our refusal to abolish them or reduce their size substantially. Norman Davis can say that without a Washington treaty we shall be free to fortify our islands in the western Pacific. But this is only talk. So far both he and the British are pressing the Japanese to produce figures showing what they really want, as though it can be told in figures. The Japanese want parity as an idea. In particular they want China to know that they no longer are inferiors by their own treaty signature. The only point to the London talks may be to make the Japanese feel they have had the opportunity to say whatever they please, since an agreement is out of the question.

In pressing the Japanese to continue to accept inferiority, we put forward two justifications. We say we are pursuing the treaty method in arriving at armaments. We say, too, that we still hope for collective action to restrain Japan, and that our navy, if not weakened, is a vital factor in it. Undoubtedly the treaty method is worth every effort. But a treaty must embody an accord, and this time an accord is not possible without a surrender we are not likely to get. As to collective action there should be no illusions. When the Assembly of the League condemned Japanese aggression and pledged itself not to recognize any changes it had achieved, that was the best to be had in collective action in the world of today.

If the talks break down, nothing can happen until 1936, for the London treaty does not expire till then, and another conference has to be held before the Washington treaty can go into the discard. Thereafter Japan might decide not to build to parity. Already there are suggestions of informal promises to this effect. That would make matters simple for us. We then could hold to the navy of the Washington and London treaties without a sense of injustice to anyone, and the Japanese would have the spiritual benefits of theoretic parity.

But the ultimate choice we may have to make is whether we will build to the five-three ratio if the Japanese decide to enlarge their navy. In the London talks we are taking the line that this ratio is not to be changed. We are doing this although we know that the ratio is not enough to give us the upper hand over Japan, and does not really matter. We know that parity is no threat to our security. We can argue for the ratio only on a "perhaps"—it may be that we have in some undemonstrable way restrained the Japanese in Asia, or at some future time may succeed in doing so. The danger is that the nuisance-navy idea, however illogical, will be accepted by the public as one of the traditions of American policy. Granted, it may be logical not to sign a treaty with Japan accepting parity. But there is nothing illogical in agreeing to Japanese parity without a treaty, even if it gives Japan free play in Asia, undesirable as that may be. If we cannot drive the Japanese out of Asia, or if we cannot get them to withdraw by threatening to drive them out, what use is a navy which will only "perhaps" make the Japanese "pause and consider"?

The idea of letting Japan build to parity will not be popular in those circles which like a chests-out foreign policy. To them it would mean withdrawing from Asia. Such people usually believe we have a destiny in the Far East. For them the navy is an instrument to protect the American flag, by which they mean business. Though the business conceivably to be lost in Asia by letting Japan have as large a navy as ours is at best an almost invisible fraction of our national production, such people will be delighted to go on building superdreadnoughts and aircraft carriers on the general theory that we are a big nation and must have our say in foreign affairs.

Another approach is still possible. We might forgo the capital ship and the aircraft carrier, and join Britain, Japan, France, and Italy in restricting the navy of the future to defensive types. This would be consistent with our own proposals at the disarmament conference, where we pressed to have land armaments restricted to defensive types. Giving up capital ships and aircraft carriers would render the American navy less effective in the face of the British and Japanese navies. But it would not jeopardize American security, and it would not lessen the safety of American shipping on the high seas.

The fact that President Roosevelt is known to be using the services of Chief Justice Hughes in studying the naval question is highly suggestive. Mr. Hughes will always be associated in the public mind with having initiated the first and greatest reduction in naval armaments. It cannot be stated whether the President is doing more than taking private advice from the Chief Justice. But the news came out that he had appealed to him at a time when the President himself was speaking of the need for reduction. It was not widely published but it attracted the attention of those who read between the lines.

Soon after, former Secretary Stimson appeared at the White House for lunch. He came at the President's behest. That the President should wish to consult such "elder statesmen" as we possess signifies that the naval question is not being left to routine treatment. It also may mean that the President has far-reaching ideas in mind. If they include the abandonment of aggressive ships, the news has yet to reach the Navy Department. There the talk is all of further building.

[*Mr. Swing contributes a regular weekly letter from Washington.*]

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Stabilize the Dollar Now!

By MAXWELL S. STEWART

TWO years have passed since Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected President of the United States. They have been years of unusual excitement, of violent fluctuations in business, of alternating hope and despair; but despite unprecedented governmental activity, economic conditions throughout the country are practically on a level with those existing when Herbert Hoover was so emphatically turned out of office. The Federal Reserve Board's index of industrial production, most fundamental of all the business indices, jumped from 66 per cent of the 1923-25 average in September, 1932, to 84 a year later, but is now back to 71. In spite of the PWA and other recovery agencies, contracts for new building construction have been running about 10 per cent below the 1932 level. Unemployment has been somewhat reduced over the two-year interval but is considerably higher than at the same period in 1933. Agricultural production, upon which real living standards are largely dependent, is lower than it has been for nearly a generation.

There is no dearth of suggestions as to what action should be taken to meet this crucial situation. We find that pressure is being brought upon the President from all directions for steps which will aid particular groups at the expense of the nation as a whole. Perhaps the most vocal and influential of these groups are those seeking further monetary experimentation. Of these the Committee for the Nation—of Wirt notoriety—is still by far the most active. Within the past two years this organization has spent more than $200,000 in its campaign for a cheaper dollar, and is now demanding that the dollar be reduced to 50 per cent of its former gold value.

This campaign is particularly dangerous because of the plausibility of the arguments for further currency depreciation. Stated without regard for complicating factors they appear unassailable. Among the primary causes of our difficulties, we are told, is the fact that the prices of basic commodities are still extremely low in comparison with fixed charges, as well as with the prices of manufactured products. This means that the producer of raw materials must materially increase his output in order to maintain an undiminished purchasing power; it also means a considerable increase in the real burden of his indebtedness, since these obligations are invariably expressed in terms of dollars. To the inflationist of the Warren school, the key to these profound maladjustments is found in the abnormal rise in the value of gold during recent years, which may be offset, according to this theory, by the simple device of increasing the government buying price for gold.

In support of their contention proponents of devaluation have made much of the recovery enjoyed by certain countries in which the depreciation of currency has exceeded our own, particularly in Great Britain, Sweden, Australia, and Argentina, as contrasted with the continued depression in the so-called gold bloc—Belgium, France, Italy, and the Netherlands. There is a certain amount of truth in this assertion, although the contrast is by no means as great as they imply. In the case of Great Britain, however, the argument proves something of a boomerang, for while British recovery has exceeded that of the United States, Great Britain has not reduced the value of its currency to the degree that we have. The situation in Sweden is complicated by the fact that it has adopted an extensive public-works scheme in addition to its monetary policy. Argentina and Australia, primarily exporters of agricultural produce, have been favored by good crops at a time when drought has wrought havoc throughout Europe and North America. Moreover, Australia has the distinction of being the one capitalist country which has adopted an intelligent and comprehensive plan for combating the depression.

For a real test of the efficacy of the Warren theory, however, we need not go abroad. It is now a little more than a year since the President initiated his campaign to cheapen the dollar in terms of foreign currencies. During this period the price of gold has risen 20 per cent, the Department of Labor index of commodity prices has advanced 8 per cent, and the retail price of foodstuffs has also increased 8 per cent. Thus it cannot be denied that the plan has achieved at least part of its objective. But higher prices have not brought improved economic conditions. During the same period the volume of industrial production has declined 15 per cent, employment has dropped 5.3 per cent, and factory pay rolls have fallen approximately 2 per cent. In the face of such facts there is little need to enter into a theoretical analysis to show why the Warren plan could not succeed. It is enough to say that for once, at least, the economists were right.

Nor was devaluation the only monetary expedient adopted during this period. Last August, in response to tremendous pressure from the organized silver interests, the government launched an extensive program of silver purchasing, likewise for the purpose of increasing commodity prices and stimulating business activity. Details regarding the execution of this program have not been made public, but it is known that American purchases are already in excess of 100,000,000 ounces, exclusive of the subsidy given to domestic producers.

The net effect of these two measures is substantially the same. Both tend to depress the dollar in terms of foreign exchange and thus give a temporary advantage to American exporters. Both tend to drain monetary reserves from foreign countries and thereby exercise a further deflationary influence on world prices. The gold-buying program has had a particularly detrimental effect on France and the gold bloc, while China has proved the chief victim of the Administration's silver policy. French wholesale prices have fallen 7.4 per cent since the United States revalued the dollar, and the recovery process which had been well under way throughout 1933 has been indefinitely set back. Belgium, Italy, and the Netherlands have also suffered from a relentless decline in wholesale prices. In China, handicapped as it is by poverty, the absence of a strong central government, and lack of machinery for the control of currency and credit, the drain of silver is likely to precipitate a severe national crisis.

Taking the world as a whole, monetary instability has

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thus become the chief barrier to recovery. As long as it exists, no country dares to reduce tariffs or make any significant move toward economic disarmament. Unless they can be assured with regard to the future value of money, traders must confine their activity to business which offers quick returns at a relatively high margin of profit, while long-term credits, like all forms of international lending, will remain practically non-existent. Moreover, when a large creditor country like the United States or Great Britain deliberately depreciates its currency, debtor nations have no alternative except to follow suit or to adopt prohibitive restrictions on trade, thus creating a vicious circle. For whether we are nationalists or internationalists at heart, we must recognize that the economic structure of the world was built on an exchange rigidity which permitted the development of an international division of labor on the basis of comparative costs. Departure from this principle involves, at the very least, considerable readjustment of the national economic structure; at the worst, the possibility that the industrial or agricultural activities of large portions of the nation's population may be wiped out overnight by monetary manipulations. In the case of the United States the pinch has been felt primarily in agriculture. Millions of farmers, particularly in the South and Southwest, long dependent on foreign markets for the sale of their products, have become so impoverished as a result of our nationalist economic policy that a government subsidy has been necessary to save them from actual starvation. Hundreds of thousands of industrial workers have likewise been thrown upon charity by our failure to adjust our economic program to present-day realities.

Abandonment of this nationalist monetary policy, however, will not be easy. Stabilization labors under a severe psychological disadvantage as compared with inflation. It has little appeal to demagogy. It cannot promise to usher in a period of prosperity tomorrow. It is negative, in the sense that it merely constitutes a return to a previous condition which was none too happy. Moreover, the term has had the misfortune of becoming almost the private property of bankers. This fact perhaps more than any other has caused the public to mistrust all attempts to restore a sound international currency.

What is needed, of course, is something more than is implied by the word stabilization. The dollar has been maintained at a fixed gold value since January 30, but we have enjoyed few of the benefits of true stability. In the first place, the threat of further devaluation has tended to make all long-term commitments extremely hazardous, thus choking the capital market. Second, the chief advantage of stabilization has been completely lacking because of the chaos in the international field. Great Britain has allowed the pound to drift within a range of 4 or 5 per cent, while the majority of other currencies have either been linked to sterling or allowed to fluctuate independently. Chinese currency has been torn from its anchorage by the American silver policy. And in those few countries which have maintained their allegiance to gold the depreciation of the dollar has created a fundamentally unstable situation.

International action cannot be obtained without bold leadership. In the financial sphere only three countries may be considered as really influential—Great Britain, France, and the United States. If these three nations could reach an agreement on stabilization, it is likely that the other countries would hasten to follow suit. But would France and Britain be willing to cooperate if the United States took the initiative at the present time? The answer, I believe, would be definitely in the affirmative if the United States exhibited a willingness to pay the full price of recovery. Certainly the time is more auspicious than any other period since we abandoned the gold standard. France is sorely pressed, and nothing could please it more than the assurance that it need not face further depreciation of the pound or the dollar. Possibly the Doumergue government might desire to revalue the franc in conjunction with an international stabilization agreement. If so, the United States could scarcely have the ill grace to object. But public sentiment in France is much more likely to demand a retention of the present parity, and the country's enormous gold reserve is a sufficient guaranty that it could be maintained, though at a cost.

In the case of Great Britain the situation is not quite so clear. There has been surprisingly little comment one way or the other on Ambassador Bingham's recent speech in which he advocated the linking of the pound and the dollar. Nevertheless, as the world's greatest trading nation, Great Britain has more to gain than any other country from the restoration of international economic stability. If an agreement could be reached on a reasonable basis, Britain would almost certainly fall in line. At the time of the World Economic Conference, or even six months ago, no such arrangement was possible. Great uncertainty existed regarding the true purchasing-power ratio between the pound and the dollar, and as a result each country sought to debase its currency as much as possible in the belief that it was thereby aiding its export trade. It is now evident, however, that stabilization at $4.86 or even $5 to the pound could be maintained without a serious strain on either nation.

From an economic point of view the task is a challeng ing one. An international currency system can only be maintained where there is a reasonably free flow of capital, goods, and services from country to country. No such condition exists today, and since most of the existing trade obstructions are defensive in character it will be extremely difficult to abolish them. Here again the United States and the other creditor countries must take the initiative, for they alone have everything to gain and nothing to lose by making the attempt. Only through stabilization, the lowering of trade barriers, and the resumption of international lending can they hope to obtain any substantial benefit from their creditor position. Should the attempt fail, the worst that could happen would be a relapse into conditions such as the world faces today. Should it be successful the world could at least have a breathing space in which to attempt to work out a more stable basis of international cooperation than has existed in the past.

But it is from a political rather than an economic standpoint that the greatest sacrifice will have to be made. The whole drift of American policy since the World War has been blindly nationalistic, in sheer disregard of our own best interests. To reverse this trend will require courage and leadership of an order rarely shown in American politics. Fortunately, however, there is reason to believe that the Administration is coming to realize that there can be no purely nationalistic solution of the economic problems facing the United States. The Administration's tariff policy, the speeches of Secretary Wallace, and the recent memorandum submitted by the American delegation to the International

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Institute of Agriculture at Rome are all clearly moves toward the reestablishment of a world economy on a basis consistent with the growth of planning and control within national boundaries. For lack of a realistic economic policy based on our creditor position we have suffered five years of unprecedented depression. The first step toward reversing this trend must of necessity be stabilization of the dollar—in conjunction with other nations if that is at all possible, if not, by independent action in the hope that others may follow our example.

What Business Men Think

II. The Hand of Improvidence

By WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON, JR.

UNDER any deal the man of affairs of 1934 would have looked out upon a troubled world wherein trade warfare had succeeded trench warfare, and every nation was engaged in barring imports from its neighbors. It follows that the observer would behold on every continent governments trying to solve a chaotic and desperate domestic situation which was part of the legacy of the World War. This was true of the new Administration in the United States headed by Franklin D. Roosevelt. What he chose to call the New Deal was, in part, his concept for coping with an acute and threatening emergency. Without delay he displayed his courage and vigor of action by his affirmative handling of the demoralized banking situation, then on the verge of collapse. His steady and confident temper generated a new hope which was immediately reflected in national sentiment and duly recorded in the quotations of the market-place. But that episode was merely a beginning. The New Deal, being both a philosophy and a mode of action, began to find expression in diverse forms which were often contradictory. Some assisted and some retarded the recovery of industrial activity. Bold and novel experiments on the part of the New Dealers soon began to startle the conservative element. An enormous outpouring of federal money for human relief and immense sums for public-works projects started to flow to all points of the compass. The nation began to think in terms of nine ciphers. Six billion dollars was added to the national debt, thereby offsetting in an incredibly short time the farsighted post-war reduction of that debt by the Coolidge Administration in the years of plenty. A bureaucracy in Washington grew by leaps and bounds, led and manned by the faithful, eager to make history. And finally, to lend the picture the heightened academic touch, John Maynard Keynes of Cambridge, England, appeared in Washington and again commended the plan of buying Utopia for cash.

Meanwhile the old freedoms, or, if you prefer, the old anarchies, of the business world are in process of restraint. New statutes hedge about the activities of bankers, brokers, industrialists, and all those who direct the use of capital. Even the rights of sovereign States and of their individual citizens seem to be somewhat dimmed. The lines of separation of governmental functions have become decidedly hazy. The President is almost a legislator. A bureau chief becomes the judicial interpreter of administrative law. A Supreme Court justice lends his wisdom to the administrative arm. Controls, restrictions, prohibitions, and warnings become the order of the day. The American business man, once the symbol of free initiative, awakens to find himself "cribbed, cabined, and confined," shorn of much of his former prestige. If he possesses a sense of humor he must recognize, of course, that the old hand of the old dealers was obviously overplayed. The aberrations of the war markets, the dizzy height of commodity prices just prior to Armistice Day, the fantastic and frantic happenings from 1922 to 1929 explain for him the political earthquake of 1932. He is busy adjusting himself to the new circumstances as he gazes upon a situation where a huge unemployment dominates the necessities of political action, as poverty and distress on the grand scale have to be dealt with daily by the masters of the state.

Yet he finds the practical problem of producing profits at this juncture to be extremely difficult, save where government spending has happily flowed out in his direction. As matters stand today, an industrial or mercantile concern not only finds its foreign markets sharply restricted but sees its home market adversely affected by serious drought and by widespread and militant strikes. It must reckon with higher taxes, higher material costs, and higher wages. It must carry on its business in terms of a dollar that is subject to further possible devaluation. It finds the government establishing or fostering competing agencies of business, and it fears further legislation hostile to its interests. On the other hand, the talons of the Blue Eagle look less terrifying since the bluff General Johnson relinquished his efforts to do the impossible. The voluntary cooperation of business developed under the NRA should stand as a permanent national benefit. The attempt at price-fixing will presumably go to the error side of the trial-and-error column. Likewise the attempt to advance wages ahead of the effective demand for goods has revealed its futility, to say nothing of its economic unorthodoxy.

The morale of the business man is, however, shaken as he observes increasingly in the government service, and in command of vastly powerful bureaus, men who are frankly Socialists in their economic faith. For the New Deal turned out to be a tripartite adventure which looked to results far beyond national recovery. It sought a recasting of our social scheme and embodied what is termed a "planned economy." The pattern of this concept can be traced to the teachings of the English Fabians on the one hand and to the Grangers of our own agricultural West on the other. Furthermore, the drama of the Russian Soviets has lent a sanguine hue to the imagination of many of the adolescents of the left wing of the new Democracy.

The further purpose of the Roosevelt program may be seen in a series of political forays calculated to destroy the prestige and power of the notable figureheads of the Re-

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publican Party, together with their allies, and to dry up the sources of revenue which made them so formidable to the Democrats in the past. It is in this arena of practical politics that Postmaster-General Farley has played such an effective part. A chorus of protest gives voice to the charge that he has dampened the fires of the civil service and has unblushingly put place-men and partisans upon the abundant new pay rolls. In addition, it has presumably been his privilege to guide the streams of plenty, voted by a perfervid Congress, in such a way as to assist enthusiasm among the voting citizens of local communities in the forty-eight States. The gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh bestowed in the State of Maine just prior to the Congressional elections were not and will not be forgotten. The outcome of that campaign, when considered in connection with the stream of federal checks now pouring into the grain States, helps to explain the continuing control of the Democratic Party in national politics. Should business recovery assert itself strongly before Congress meets, it is possible that new and radical legislation might be held measurably in check. In default of definite recovery we may expect another outburst of demagogic profligacy which would postpone budget balancing to the Greek calends and pave the way to ultimate money inflation.

What could be done to save us from such a calamity? The President alone has the power to give effective encouragement to business at this time. The business and banking community awaits some sincere assurance that there will be less interference by government agencies with the law of supply and demand. It wants to hear that an immediate effort will be made to check the flood of expenditures, thereby insuring an honest purpose to balance the budget.

A more hopeful and even more significant move would be the early inclusion among the President's advisers of more men of high reputation and long experience in the realm of practical affairs. The responsible man of affairs, with capital at risk in enterprise, who has known the alternations of hope and fear and has come to comprehend the significance of those sequences which tie together the periods of peak prosperity and panic decline, has procured an education through experience that has in it the beginnings of wisdom. To a man of such training much of the hasty and emotional legislation of the New Deal is not only absurd but hopelessly obstructive to the government's own program of recovery. In default of some substantial strengthening of the personnel of the Administration, we can look only for a continuation of that ingenuous and venturesome opportunism which carries a gambler's risks. There is some encouragement, to be sure, in the fact that several members of the Brain Trust have been moving unostentatiously from the center toward the circumference of the political circle. As that scholar and rhapsodist, Dr. Rexford G. Tugwell, disappeared over the Atlantic's horizon there came inevitably to mind Matthew Arnold's characterization of Shelley, "Beautiful and ineffectual angel, beating in the void his luminous wings in vain!"

The democratic plan of government is not fool proof. It works very badly—panic succeeding prosperity—when it is saturated with monopoly, especially land monopoly, which shuts out the common man from the sources of production. The dangerous elements of monopoly should be eliminated by legal and peaceful means, as is entirely possible when the voting public has been sufficiently educated to understand the fundamental laws that govern production and exchange. But a mere transfer from individual monopoly to state monopoly, with its consequent regimentation and fettering of essential freedoms, can effect no cure of the malady. A democracy can be wrecked by bureaucrats, however high-sounding their ideals, who fail to conserve the nation's credit and thereby open wide the door, even if unintentionally, to the destructive forces of anarchy. When the history of our times is written, it is probable that the demoralization of the voters of the country by the distribution of floods of money from the public treasury, coupled with a false philosophy which declares that every man is entitled to be maintained out of the public funds, will be regarded as the most glaring of the political errors of our generation.

Even so, is there not some effective and hopeful means for dealing with our immediate national problems? As affairs now stand, specific recommendations seem well-nigh futile. So general has been the flouting of economic law that "confusion now hath made its masterpiece." The false price and wage levels decreed by the NRA; the disruptive and punitive character of the Securities Act and of the Stock Exchange Act, with the consequent starving of the heavy industries; the prentice work of the New Deal surgeons upon the corpus of the public utilities—all suggest that time and reflection must first be permitted to color the thought and action of the Congress, the Cabinet, and the Chief Executive.

We may be grateful, however, that some measure of recovery from the depths of depression is evident throughout the world. This tendency should help to carry us gradually, if haltingly, forward.

[*This is the second of a series of four articles by business men discussing various aspects of the New Deal. The third will appear in an early issue.*]

In the Driftway

THE Drifter's editorial colleagues have already commented with typical solemnity on the Old-Age Revolving Pension Plan, sometimes called the Townsend plan, of rewarding men and women over sixty with a monthly stipend of $200. They must, of course, agree to renounce any private income they may have, they must not engage in any remunerative work, and they must spend their whole pension in the United States before the next monthly check comes due. For various reasons, at any age, the Drifter is outside these considerations. In the first place, although he has picked innumerable places to which, in his declining years, he might repair, in no one of them would it be even remotely possible to spend so much money in the space of thirty days. He would not, presumably, be expected suddenly to assume the support of a family. And for himself, an elderly retired Drifter in reasonably good health, $200 would last not one month but well on to six. What would undoubtedly happen, in the case of the oldsters so suddenly enriched, would be that their pension would go for gewgaws for their grandchildren. But since, as a result of the revolving pension fund, the depression would be over and everybody would be in funds once more, the little darlings would be merely still more spoiled by grandpa's presents, which would be returned with thanks by a determined parent.

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PERHAPS the brightest promise of the Townsend planners is that "society would be able to utilize one of its most valuable assets, the brains and experience of old people, now dissipated in the task of keeping body and soul together." To which the Drifter answers, "Pish!" The number of men, and women too, who have not completed their best work by the time they are sixty—whether under the duress of economic necessity or not—could be set dancing in a row on the point of a needle, along with the angels that were formerly thought to frolic there. Some of the Drifter's best friends are over sixty. They appear to be in full possession of their faculties and even to enjoy life in a quiet and eminently satisfactory way. But as an active and valuable asset to society—that is another matter. Consider the great in almost any field: At sixty Chaucer was dead, as Shakespeare was at fifty-two; Milton finished "Paradise Lost" when he was fifty-eight; Leonardo lived to be sixty-seven, but he spent his last years merely in accepting the adulation which he had so richly earned in his youth; Harvey at thirty-eight had begun the lectures on the circulation of the blood which made him famous; Machiavelli died at fifty-eight; Jane Austen at forty-one; Tolstoy at sixty had long since finished his greatest works; Keats and Shelley are too obvious examples to need more than mention. The exception of Thomas Hardy, who was still writing poetry of high rank at eighty, merely proves the rule. No, let us be very clear about our old-age pensions. They would make more pleasant the last years of those persons who received them, they would lift a financial burden from those young persons who had formerly to support old ones, they would create new jobs; but that they would enrich the world by new works of art or of science, or even by workable new ideas, the Drifter very much doubts.

* * * * *

ON at least one other point he takes issue with the exponents of Dr. Townsend's particular Utopia. "Assurance of safety in old age," they assert, "would abolish the tendency of hoarding and selfishness which now clog up the circulation of money." The Drifter has another pish for that. *Men hoard—when they do—because they are by nature miserly*; they make desperate attempts to accumulate wealth because they like wealth, today, not at sixty; and they are selfish as God made them, not with any idea of keeping themselves safely in their old age. There are, in short, many difficulties about the Townsend plan. The most difficult of all, Where Would the Money Come From? the Drifter is content to leave to his more serious-minded colleagues.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

"Women and Wages"

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

The article by Alma Lutz on Women and Wages in *The Nation* for October 17 reflects the usual abstract and theoretical point of view of a small number of professional women with respect to labor legislation for industrial women. In their eagerness to establish the rights of women in general, the opponents of protective legislation for women workers would sweep away the barriers against exploitation and oppression which have been slowly erected through long years of effort on the part of persons close to workers and on the part of the workers themselves.

As to the minimum wage becoming the maximum, this has not occurred in any State in this country or in any nation in Europe. In times of widespread unemployment the difference between the highest and lowest wage levels shrinks because minimum wages are pegged and kept from sagging to bottomless depths, while the higher wages are not so controlled and therefore sink under the pressure from the vast reservoir of unemployed. It is important to note that under NRA codes it is in such notoriously sweated branches of industry as cotton textiles and cotton garments that the differential between minimum and maximum wages has shrunk. That the minimum wage has substantially helped workers in even the most substandard industry is obvious when we contrast the average hourly wage of 22 cents for cotton-textile operatives in February, 1933, with the average of 37.6 cents in July, 1934.

It is absurd to quote California experience under minimum-wage legislation as an argument against such laws. In the spring of 1933 at a legislative hearing on a bill designed to change the set-up and decrease appropriations for minimum-wage enforcement, there was overwhelming support by workers, social workers, and employers for increased efforts to enforce the law. A friend of mine present at the hearing wrote me at the time, "The whole consensus of the meeting was that the minimum wage must be preserved."

Citation of the adjustment in the Oregon minimum-wage decree for women in canneries during the depression is simply proof of the flexibility of minimum-wage laws. In contrast to the 22½ cents an hour guaranteed to women cannery workers in Oregon, the Consumers' League of New York disclosed by an investigation made in the summer of 1933 that three-fourths of the women in the canneries covered were making 12½ cents an hour, and some were making even less.

Miss Lutz apparently is unfamiliar with the fact that the New York minimum-wage law is applicable industry by industry, and that the only wage board yet set up is for the laundry industry. The law provides a trial period of nine months before a wage decree becomes mandatory. Reports of the New York Department of Labor indicate a substantial rise in the average weekly rate of pay for laundry workers after the decree went into effect, and this notwithstanding the fact that hours had been shortened. More money was made in less time.

It is impossible to discover where Miss Lutz got her figures when she states that "average earnings for women in New York City are as low as $9.93 a week, and in the rest of the State as low as $4.29." She does not give the date or source of these figures nor the occupations they cover. The Department of Labor informs us that in July, 1934, average weekly earnings of laundry and dry-cleaning employees were $13.98 for the State and $14.38 for New York City.

Again, Miss Lutz is not sufficiently informed when she cites the threat of North Dakota employers to replace women with men if required to pay the minimum wage. The Commissioner of Labor of North Dakota wrote us after this threat was made that it was an empty gesture and that no women had lost their jobs.

Space forbids listing the more than seventy local, State, and national organizations that supported the New York minimum-wage bill, many of them including large numbers of industrial women. The newspaper roster of organizations opposing the bill shows several business and professional women's groups but only two groups of employees of business concerns, the members of one of which were almost certainly coerced by threats of dismissal if they did not take this position.

New York, October 27 LUCY R. MASON,
General Secretary, National Consumers' League

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An Anti-Fascist at Columbia

To the Editors of The Nation:

I find in your article Fascism at Columbia University, in *The Nation* for November 7, a statement which is not quite correct. Your investigator writes: "The Casa has several rooms for Italian visitors to this country, but none except fascists have been housed there." I was, with my wife, a guest at the Casa Italiana in October, 1931; at that time Professor Prezzolini had not yet declared himself a supporter of fascism, while my anti-fascism was well known to him as it was to everyone who came in contact with me. Other anti-fascists and non-fascists were housed at the Casa Italiana until the end of 1931; about the following period I am not informed.

But I must say that after the laws were passed which imposed the fascist oath and membership in the Fascist Party upon Italian university professors, the gap between fascist and anti-fascist intellectuals abroad became so wide as to leave no possibility of an intermediate position or any safe ground for personal and academic intercourse. Italy being what she now is, the Casa Italiana could not help being a center of fascist propaganda. However, it is only fair to demand a certain regard for the elementary requirements of scholarly integrity from the people of the Casa Italiana, and an unremitting vigilance on the part of the authorities of Columbia University. To the attainment of these goals your campaign is a timely contribution.

New York, November 3 Max Ascoli

A Correction from Louis Fischer

To the Editors of The Nation:

In my article A Trip Around Russia in *The Nation* for October 31, I wrote that the Soviet Union had exported 27,000,000 tons of wheat in 1933-34. I copied the figure wrongly from the London *Times*. It should be 27,000,000 bushels, and bushels in the next sentence, too.

Moscow, October 17 Louis Fischer

Contributors to This Issue

Oscar Jaszi was Hungarian Minister of Nationalities in the Karolyi government. He is now professor of political economy at Oberlin College.

William Lloyd Garrison, Jr., is a recently retired investment banker.

H. L. Mencken is well known as author and editor.

Philip Blair Rice has contributed reviews and critical articles to *The Nation* and the *Symposium*.

Sidney B. Fay is professor of European history at Harvard University.

Ernest Gruening, a former editor of *The Nation*, is chief of the Division of Territories and Island Possessions of the Department of the Interior.

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Labor Notes

The Old Men Win

THE recent election of officers in the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers resulted in a victory for the conservatives. The race was close, with several rank-and-file candidates losing by a few hundred votes. Only 5,300 members voted in the election. There are at least 35,000 members in the union. Some of these have paid dues, some have paid in part. A member's dues must be paid in full before he can vote. A conservative was elected vice-president of the Industrial Division, a new office created by the last annual convention, which was dominated by the rank-and-file leaders. A sixty-year-old member of a defunct lodge was elected assistant secretary-treasurer, an office which has been vacant since 1931. Mike Tighe has been an officer since 1898, president since 1919. He will be seventy-nine years old if he lives out his two-year term. Ben Davis, feeble-minded editor of the *Amalgamated Journal,* has held the position since 1899, although his son does the actual work of putting out one of the worst labor publications of the country. Shorty Leonard, secretary-treasurer, has held the office since 1919. Tom Gillis and Ed Miller, vice-presidents, are virtually newcomers, since both are starting only their sixth year in office. John Savage, resident trustee, who is also the janitor in the union's building, was unopposed. Al Armour, rank and filer, was elected a trustee. The other trustee is a conservative.

Each steel district has an organization committee which is powerless to act, according to the union's rules, and is supposed to meet for educational purposes. These district committees are controlled by the rank and filers, voting membership being based on five members for each lodge regardless of size or dues-paying members. The conservative leaders of the steel workers are unwilling to conduct a massive organizing campaign, and if they were willing would prove incapable. There will be a joint district meeting in Pittsburgh early in November. Will the rank-and-file leaders, many of whom are more experienced now than last June, take some power into their own hands? It might be pointed out that the Amalgamated Clothing Workers at one time was an organization within an organization whose leaders were as conservative as Tighe, Leonard, et al.

The Dock Strike Settlement

TO all outward appearances the award recently handed down by the National Longshoremen's Board brings the Pacific Coast dock strike of last summer to a successful if belated conclusion. The award establishes a standard work week of thirty hours, with a six-hour day and a five-day week. Straight-time pay is increased by 10 cents an hour to a total of 95 cents. Over-time pay is raised 15 cents an hour to $1.40. Moreover, the pay increases are made retroactive to July 1, 1934. A compromise is struck on the question of control over the hiring halls. It will be recalled that the International Longshoremen's demand for exclusive control was the fundamental issue in the walkout which began last May and culminated finally in the short-lived San Francisco general strike. Henceforth the hiring halls will be managed under the joint control of the I. L. A. and the steamship-line employers. But the award specifically provides that the hall dispatchers, the officers who assign the workers to the various docks, must be chosen by the union. This is union recognition of the most practical kind. The award, unanimous except for the dissent of the employer member on pay rates which he thought were too high, will go into effect without any difficulties of enforcement, inasmuch as the employers have already signified their assent. The longshoremen of the Atlantic and Gulf ports are now expected to make a drive for equivalent conditions. This should not be too difficult since the steamship mail subsidies provide the government with an ace card in what is at bottom a game of *Realpolitik*.

Working for the Government

THE plight of the substitute postal employee illustrates how the government can preach one thing to private business and practice quite another. The postal authorities are boasting about the surplus in postal revenues. They naturally fail to point out that the post-office economies which have produced this surplus have been achieved at the expense of the regular employees through the stretch-out and the speed-up, and of approximately 26,000 substitute postal workers who have been reduced to a starvation wage and in many cases forced to apply for public relief. The postal substitute is on call at all hours of the day or night, on Sundays and holidays. He is called only when the work is too heavy for the already overburdened regulars, and he is paid by the hour at a rate considerably lower than that for regular postal employees. Formerly the period of substituting was from several months to two years. The present substitutes, some of whom have served for from four to eleven years, are doomed to an indefinite period because in the interests of economy all appointments to regular jobs were suspended three years ago.

The extremely wretched condition of postal substitutes has resulted in the rise of a militant organization, the National Association of Substitute Post Office Employees, which has fought retrenchments in the Post Office with great energy. The effectiveness of this organization has been demonstrated by many small makeshift concessions granted by the department, the last one being the appointment, on August 16 last, of 1,885 substitutes to regular positions. It is also reflected in the attitude of the bosses—in this case, postmasters appointed by the government—toward the activities of the union.

In St. Louis Substitute Clerk William F. Hill, a national officer of the N. A. S. P. O. E. and president of the local, wrote a letter to the St. Louis *Star-Times* pointing out the comparatively small number of post-office vacancies filled on August 16 (Postmaster-General Farley's 1933 report showed that there were 20,000 such vacancies caused by death and retirement) and pointing out also that the present curtailment of services would not be alleviated until more appointments of substitutes were made and the undermanned condition of the post office corrected. The St. Louis Acting Postmaster, W. Rufus Jackson, immediately preferred various inapplicable charges against Hill, including "moral turpitude" for writing such a letter, and recommended his dismissal. In his attack upon Hill, Jackson made no reference to his connection with the N. A. S. P. O. E., but in press statements he branded the organization as "a communistic element fomenting unrest"; and he stigmatized certain active members of the organization before the whole body of substitutes as foreigners and "rats." Charges of intimidation, reprisals against active members, and the institution of a reign of terror have been made by substitutes of the St. Louis Post Office in affidavits filed with the American Civil Liberties Union, which has taken up the case on the score of constitutional rights.

The Hill case has now had repercussions in New York City, where Albert Schatzberg, another substitute clerk, has been recommended for discipline or dismissal because as a member of the organization he took part in the defense of Hill.

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Books, Drama, Films

Wells Nearing Three Score

Experiment in Autobiography. Discoveries and Conclusions of a Very Ordinary Brain (Since 1866). By H. G. Wells. The Macmillan Company. $4.

THERE is, of course, no such thing as a bad autobiography. Let any man who can qualify as literate at all take his pen in hand and gabble about himself, and the result is bound to be an instructive and entertaining book. If he tries honestly to tell the truth, then at least a little of it will get into his narrative, and whatever is true about one human being, however lowly, is an engrossing matter to all others. And if he attempts to lie, then his lying, in the main, will be transparent, and his readers will be enchanted no less, for lying is always amusing. I can recall no life of a man by himself that was downright dull. I used to go to secondhand bookstores and buy the fly-blown autobiographies of Methodist missionaries, professional war veterans, eminent actors, and other such bores, but never once did I bring home a book that was quite unreadable, in the way that so many novels, and books of verse, and especially so many treatises on the sorrows of the world, are unreadable.

Mr. Wells gets a lot about the sorrows of the world into his story, for he has wasted a great deal of his time and energy trying to cure them, but they are happily drowned in his own private woes, some of them serious and the rest pleasantly ridiculous. For many years he had very bad health, and against it he struggled with a gallantry that he here makes light of but does not manage to conceal altogether. This gave him a square look into the abyss, and what he saw there was surely no Utopia. His two marriages turned out badly, though one of them endured for thirty years. He attempts a long analysis of them, with some aid from the Freudian astrology, but all he contrives to reveal is that his private judgment is very poor. But this is no news, for one of the chief marks of a man whose private judgment is poor is his passionate conviction that humanity would be better off if it took his counsel.

Mr. Wells has made three separate careers. He began as a biologist, switched to journalism and then to literature, and finally set up shop as a prophet. My guess is that he'd have been a happier fellow, and much more useful to his nation and his time, if he had stuck to his first choice. For his mind is essentially scientific, even when his discourse is of love and its sweet hallucinations. He is always trying to unearth the facts that lie beneath appearances, and to arrange them in orderly chains. In Huxley's laboratory he was completely at home, and if Huxley had not walked out on him, leaving him to greatly inferior professors, he would have remained there. Outside he has floundered uncomfortably, seeking facts in areas where none were to be found, and then consoling himself by imagining them, and by erecting bold theoretical structures upon their shaky foundation. It says enough about his blind groping to note that he has fallen, of late, for the New Deal, and is convinced that Dr. Roosevelt has "mental arms" that are "long."

His greatest success, using the noise made and the money earned as criteria, came to him as a novelist, but it is hardly likely that his novels will long outlive him. That he has some skill in evoking plausible and moving characters he proved in the case of "Mr. Polly," but in most of his stories the people are hardly more than sandwich-men for his current enthusiasms. That is certainly true of "Ann Veronica" and "Marriage," and it is also true, save for a few riotous moments, of "Tono-Bungay." These books are primarily tracts, and today, for all their technical virtuosity, they begin to seem as archaic as the tracts of the Fabians. Put them beside "Babbitt," and you will see the difference between a manifesto, however clever, and a human document, however imperfect. Wells plainly had a lot of fun writing them, but his inner pull was against them, and in the end he yielded to it, and began trying to reduce history to syllogisms. He succeeded publicly but failed actually, for history remains a mystery, and there is no useful clue to its secret in the "Outline."

His notion that his mind is "ordinary" is apparently sincere; if so, it is only one more proof of his unfitness for metaphysical exercises. His mind is really one of the most extraordinary that England has produced in our time. It moves swiftly and daringly, and overlooks little that lies along its path. It has an insatiable acquisitiveness, and a great deal of originality. Day in and day out it buzzes with ideas, good, bad, and indifferent. No other contemporary writer has said so many things worth hearing, though maybe not worth heeding. Compared to him, Shaw is only a kind of monomaniac. If he had remained faithful to biology he might have been another Huxley, and perhaps even a greater than Huxley. But a whole herd of Huxleys would have been baffled by the problems he has actually tackled. In that wilderness of human relations which he explores so assiduously nothing properly describable as science is yet possible, for the data at hand are still too meager, and even the most elemental laws remain to be discovered. Wells, unable to discover them, resorted to the unhappy device of assuming them. The result was some magnificent writing, but it was only writing, not science. In the laboratory there would have been better materials for so ingenious a man, and hence better chances.

But all this, of course, is only saying that the world commonly misuses its men of talent. Three-fourths of them are square pegs suffering in round holes. In the ideal commonwealth that Wells has so often envisaged (and in so many different forms) they would be sorted out more rationally, and made more comfortable. But that commonwealth tarries beyond the sky rim. While it lingers there we must be content to see natural-born evangelists performing sadly as scientists, and natural-born scientists told off to spin yarns and whoop up New Deals.

H. L. MENCKEN

Russia Weighed in the Balance

Russia's Iron Age. By William Henry Chamberlin. Little, Brown and Company. $4.

I Worked for the Soviet. By Countess Alexandra Tolstoy. Yale University Press. $3.

IT would be interesting to chart, as a statistical exercise, the correlation between the curve of Soviet industrial production and the appearance of critical or anti-Soviet books. This strange phenomenon might be interpreted in any one of several ways. A critic of the Five-Year Plan would suggest that it was because industrial progress had been attained at the expense of the masses of the people. A Communist would see in it a deliberate plot to obscure the really remarkable achievements of the Soviet Union as contrasted with capitalist failure. Possibly it is neither of these, but merely a reaction from the wave of pro-Soviet books published in recent years.

None of these explanations quite account for Mr. Chamberlin's latest book. Because of his long residence in Moscow and the general merit of his former work, Mr. Chamberlin has long been considered among the three or four leading American authorities on Soviet affairs. In certain respects his present volume sustains his reputation. It is comprehensive, up to date, and admirably written. But unlike his earlier writings, it is

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severely critical of recent Soviet developments. Moreover, one has the feeling, whether justified or not, of a constant, subconscious comparison between capitalism and communism, to the disparagement of the latter.

Among the specific criticisms which the author brings against recent Soviet policy, four points stand out as worthy of special mention. He objects, first of all, to the ruthlessness with which industrialization was pushed, involving, as he claims, great injustice to the better-to-do peasants and cruelty to the Soviet class-enemies. Second, he maintains, on the basis of considerable evidence, that the success of the Five-Year Plan has resulted in a lowering of living standards throughout the country, and that the price paid by the peasantry has been out of all proportion to their gains. Third, he compares the drive for industrialization under Stalin with the modernization program of Peter the Great, suggesting that both are the result of the Russian temperament and that both were forced through without sufficient regard for human values. Finally, he discerns a growing nationalism and an increasing inequality of income which suggests a return to the evils of capitalism.

Since it is impossible to take up these charges in detail, it should be pointed out in passing that other observers, fully as competent, deny that conditions such as he describes are in any sense typical. Recent reports indicate, moreover, a substantial improvement in general living conditions. Nevertheless, the fact remains that industrialization has been achieved at great cost. From the Soviet point of view the only issue of importance is whether or not the sacrifices which have been made have advanced the cause of socialism. In order to answer this question some account at least must be taken of what the Communists term the dialectical approach. With this, unfortunately, Mr. Chamberlin has very little sympathy. For him the dialectical method, which is the basis of Soviet tactics, may be roughly equated with the doctrine that the end justifies the means. Thus unable or unwilling to grasp the basis of Communist theory, which has been the secret of the amazing flexibility of the Soviet system, he falls into the fallacy of postulating the future on the basis of surface trends. This error is apparent, for example, in his assumption that the present inequalities of pay and privilege are likely to become crystallized into basic class distinctions—though contrary to all the tenets of communism. It also explains his lack of sympathy for the view that collectivization was necessary in order to uproot the growing bourgeois tendencies among the peasantry.

This does not mean that Mr. Chamberlin is wholly blind to the constructive achievements of the Soviet regime. He admits that substantial progress has been made in the spheres of education, public health, recreation, culture, and in the betterment of conditions for industrial workers. But even here he qualifies his praise by repeated accusations of regimentation and inefficiency, so that the impression is one of dubious success. As a result the picture given, with all due regard to the prestige and presumed sincerity of the author, is little more than a caricature of life in Russia today. True, most of the essential facts are there, but they are set in curious relief by the absence of more than a passing acknowledgment of some of the most significant phases of the Soviet world. Practically nothing is said, for example, regarding the measures taken for the protection and emancipation of women. There is only the scantiest mention of public-health activities, the care and protection of children, the treatment of criminals, or the noteworthy achievements in the field of science. Only on rare occasions does one catch a glimpse in the pages of the book of the spirit which animates the Soviet scene, which causes millions to forget material hardships in the joy of building a new society. This does not necessarily imply that Mr. Chamberlin has deliberately misrepresented Soviet life: he is merely unable to see the forest for the trees.

"I Worked for the Soviet" is a completely different kind of book. The author, a daughter of Leo Tolstoy, has been openly unsympathetic with Bolshevism from the outset. As a result of mild counter-revolutionary activity she ran afoul of the Cheka and served two terms in prison. Nevertheless, she tells her story simply and with few recriminations. Many of her experiences, particularly those in prison, are of absorbing interest. Although, unlike certain other members of her family, she failed to adjust herself to the new society, she is honest and straightforward in admitting it. As a frank class-conscious book, it is at least subject to none of the misunderstandings which arise from the analysis of a supposed "impartial" observer.

MAXWELL S. STEWART

Edna Millay's Maturity

Wine from These Grapes. By Edna St. Vincent Millay. Harper and Brothers. $2.

IN this, Miss Millay's first volume in three years, there is evidence of a remarkable transformation, of a growth not only toward intellectual maturity but also toward poetic integrity. If it continues, the change promises to be comparable with that of the earlier into the later Yeats.

One contemplates any change in Miss Millay, indeed, with mixed emotions. In these times she has been the only poet of exceptional gifts to carry on the high romantic tradition with gusto; and it is well enough to have a romantic or two about, lest we ossify. But such gentry tend either to develop or to become overblown. In her recent books the odds on the two courses seemed about even. Several poems in "Buck in the Snow" were sounder and subtler than anything she had done before, and "Fatal Interview" contained a few sonnets that were almost flawless after their kind. But the trappings of Elizabethan pageantry had come to seem definitely faded with use; and there was a forced and melodramatic note in the exchange of her earlier role, of big-hearted girl giving easement zestfully to unremembered lads, for that of treacherous queen taking her knights to bed.

On the whole, then, Miss Millay's fresh start is to be welcomed. In place of the metronomic beat of the early poems and the uncertain cadences of much of her later verse, she now writes with a tight but supple rhythm that shapes itself to the thought and the mood. The images spring from direct experience, mellowed, and often indeed slightly blurred, by reflection; or, in many instances, from science assimilated to sensation.

Several of the poems treat explicitly of the poet's break with her past. Such are Sappho Crosses the Dark River into Hades, where Sappho asks only for a quiet corner of hell unencroached upon by Phaon, and Desolation Dreamed Of, with its repudiation of romantic escape:

> I said farewell. Nevertheless,
> Whom have I quitted?—which of my possessions do I propose to leave?
> Not one. This feigning to be asleep when wide awake is all the loneliness
> I shall ever achieve.

There is also the discovery of selflessness:

> When will you learn, my self, to be
> A dying leaf on a living tree? . . .
> Has not this trunk a deed to do
> Unguessed by small and tremulous you?

The principal theme of the book is a meditation on death—death as it appears both to the individual and to the race. This theme, in the first of its aspects, has been a favorite with Miss Millay of late. But whereas the prevailing mood hitherto has been one of a rather frantic desire to cheat death of as much of

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his harvest as possible, she now is resigned to giving Charon his due, if no gratuities. "Childhood is the kingdom where nobody dies"; maturity, in Lines for a Grave-Stone, pays the dead homage without envy; and the poet's final word is: "I shall die, but that is all that I shall do for death."

This treatment of the subject from the perspective of the individual is, however, but an episode in the development of the main theme, which is the extinction of the race. Miss Millay foresees for man not an anonymous death in the "sun's bubbling bowl," nor a slow demise "lost in whistling space without a mind," but self-destruction in internecine conflict. Although the theme is treated at greatest length in the sequence of eighteen sonnets entitled Epitaph for the Race of Man, no one of them, perhaps, is as effective as the brief poem in a freer measure, Apostrophe to Man. Miss Millay has not yet altogether subdued the sonnet form to her new-found manner. Its restrictions often tempt her facility, and at times ensnare her in the conventionally cosmic. The least ambitious of the sonnets, such as X and XII of the final sequence, are the most successful.

There is, finally, an issue which I should have preferred not to raise. But it has been broached before, and it is revived by the statement on the jacket of this book that Miss Millay is "one of our great poets." The adjective cannot in any case be applied with assurance to a contemporary; there are, however, more specific reasons why those who use the word sparingly might wish to withhold it from Miss Millay's achievements to date. Her work is not rich enough in overtones and in contrapuntal cross-references to be great musical verse; nor sufficiently marmoreal for great plastic verse; nor of such comprehensive ordering power as to be great poetry of ideas. At its best, it falls just short of that intensity which is found in the highest moments even of some contemporary poetry. There is a word slightly in the way, or else the image lacks the needle point. It never quite, to use E. E. Cummings's phrase, "lifts the top of your head off." This volume, however, contains verse that is both distinguished and thoroughly honest, and it renews the possibility that Miss Millay may yet earn the stronger adjective.

PHILIP BLAIR RICE

Lloyd George Takes Control

War Memoirs of David Lloyd George, 1916-1917. Volume III. Little, Brown and Company. $4.

THE first two volumes of Lloyd George's Memoirs (reviewed in these columns, December 13, 1933) covered the first two years of the war. The third deals with the difficult six months following the overthrow of the Asquith ministry, when the dynamic Welshman became captain of the ship instead of first mate (Minister of Munitions). He explains why and how he made up his Cabinet as he did, indulging as usual in spicy, if not always complimentary, comments on leading personalities. In spite of his "disinclination for revealing unpleasant public truths which reflect on distinguished public servants," he declares that the truth of history demands that people "see how reckless and unintelligent handling brought us almost to the rim of catastrophe and how we were saved largely by the incredible folly of our foes."

The first and most valuable third of his volume explains the extraordinary but characteristic energy with which he took steps to meet the submarine peril. Runciman at the Board of Trade and Jellicoe at the Admiralty, he asserts, showed an incredible pessimism and unresourcefulness in meeting the new danger which threatened to give victory to the Germans. "We had a palsied and muddle-headed Admiralty declaring that nothing could be done." Misinterpreting shipping statistics and rejecting all suggestions of civilian experts, the Admiralty brass

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buttons long opposed the convoy system to protect Britain's supply of food, munitions, and men from overseas. Lloyd George speedily appointed Sir Eric Geddes as First Lord of the Admiralty, and Sir Joseph Maclay, a practical Glasgow shipowner whom he had never seen but who was highly recommended by Bonar Law, as Shipping Controller. They gave the convoy system a fair chance, and it soon proved one of the most effective means of protecting merchant shipping. At the same time vigorous measures were taken to secure more tonnage by building and purchasing ships, to provide a more efficient transportation system, and to grow more food in England. How gigantic the transportation problem was may be seen from his figures: during the war and up to November, 1920, the troops, nurses, and prisoners moved by the Army Sea Transport numbered over 33,000,000, not to mention 2,400,000 horses, mules, and camels, and 49,000,000 tons (equal to 122,000,000 shipping tons) of stores and equipment.

There follow several chapters on the military direction of the war. Here Lloyd George takes the generals, especially Joffre, to task with the same vigor as the British admirals. In spite of two years of frightful loss of life in trench warfare, they wished to continue the fruitless efforts on the western front, where the enemy was strongest. Lloyd George, on the other hand, wanted to try a surprise where he was weakest—from the East or from the Italian side; but militarist opinion was too strong against him. In this connection he has some caustic things to say, in a chapter on Psychology and Strategy, about French jealousy and unwillingness to support an Italian offensive which might dim the glory of French arms.

The Russian Revolution and America's entry into the war are dealt with in the closing chapters. They are less valuable as Lloyd George was not one of the principal actors and has little to contribute that is new. Others have told the story more fully and authoritatively. Yet there is much of dramatic interest in his reports of the Balfour, Northcliffe, and Reading missions to Washington, which did so much to promote harmony between the two great Anglo-Saxon peoples, and the Milner mission to Russia, which was futile because of the seething chaos which erupted into revolution a few days after the Allied delegates left Petrograd.

SIDNEY B. FAY

Mexican Empire

Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico. By José Luis Blasio. Translated by Robert Hammond Murray. Yale University Press. $3.

Phantom Crown. By Bertita Harding. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $3.50.

THE empire of Maximilian is a unique and intriguing episode in history. It combines the elements of high tragedy, melodrama, and opera bouffe. The designs of emperors, the will of peoples, the destiny of nations, and the love, ambition, and disaster of a man and a woman are intertwined in a drama that provides a varied appeal to every human emotion. No wonder then that an enormous literature has sprung up about Maximilian and Carlotta. Much of it is autobiographical—the first-hand accounts, on the one hand, of the French, Austrian, Belgian, and Mexican participants in the attempt of Napoleon III to create a transatlantic empire, and of defenders of the republic on the other. So vast is the amount of material, much of it still unutilized in the archives of European capitals or in the possession of the descendants of principals, that the historians can reconstruct an almost hour-to-hour account of the movements and actions of the Hapsburg archduke from his departure from Trieste on April 14, 1864, to his execution at Queretaro on June 19, 1869.

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The most intimate close-up of the Hapsburg archduke is that by his Mexican secretary, José Luis Blasio. Written simply and without guile, a detailed account of the Emperor's daily routine, it is a useful portrait painted in friendly fashion. Blasio denies the stories of the Emperor's infidelity to Carlotta; yet maintains firmly that a complete physical estrangement existed between them throughout their years in Mexico.

"Phantom Crown" is probably the most satisfactory one-volume account of the Maximilian episode in print. It starts with the European origins, that is, with the underlying economic bases of intervention, and ends with the death of Carlotta in 1927. It is brilliantly written, with a keen sense of values and the proper proportions of pathos and irony. The author has read widely, although there are both curious omissions and curious inclusions in the bibliography. Recent trivial and wholly unimportant secondary works are included, but such invaluable studies as Gaulot's three-volume "La Verité sur L'Expédition du Mexique," Reinach-Foussemagne's "Charlotte de Belgique," and numerous other primary sources are omitted, nor have the indispensable Belgian archives or the less important Spanish and British archives been consulted. ERNEST GRUENING

Shorter Notices

Goodbye to the Past. By W. R. Burnett. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

It may surprise a number of W. R. Burnett's readers to find him publishing a novel like "Goodbye to the Past." At the same time, it is almost inevitable that he should do so. Hitherto, Mr. Burnett has preoccupied himself with the idiosyncrasies of modern America. His novels have been peopled with gangsters, chorus girls, and prize fighters. Those who expect to meet these tabloid friends in "Goodbye to the Past" will be disappointed. His latest hero is Bill Meadows, a pioneer Middle Western industrialist who founded a fortune on a lucky strike in silver. He is a pure American product, crude, racy, imaginative, indomitable. The story begins with the death of the old hellion, still stubborn but helplessly old, in the house of his thin-blooded son. It carries him backward through days of factory strikes, horse racing, gambling, adultery, marriage, silver mining, until at length it leaves him as a rough, hot-headed kid of seventeen, fighting in the last battles of the Civil War. It is a good story, well and richly told. Tough and sentimental at the same time, it warms the heart and befuddles the mind. So high is the entertainment value of this tale of individualism, so truly remarkable its superficial realism, that it is an ungrateful act to suggest that Bill Meadows may not have been quite the lovable, gold-hearted rascal that his creator considers him. The book might have had more depth and honesty, if not more liveliness, had the author viewed his hero with a really dispassionate eye.

Our Mysterious Life Glands and How They Affect Us. By William J. Robinson. Eugenics Publishing Company. $2.50.

This book, despite its alluring title, is completely uninspired and makes very dull reading. It is an example of the poorer type of popular writing on scientific subjects, being no more than a sketchy summary of the more obvious facts. It does not at all touch basic biological principles, nor does it achieve a unified picture of the interrelations of the different endocrine glands in the general body economy. In praise of the work one can only say that for the most part the author attempts to present only such facts as have been proved according to the limits of present research facilities. There is a section on vitamins which is no better than the rest of the book.

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Drama

The Grand Canal

"THE FARMER TAKES A WIFE" (Forty-sixth Street Theater) sounds British and "earthy." It is, on the contrary, very American and quite watery—being the really delightful play about the boom days of the Erie Canal which Frank Elser and Marc Connelly have made out of the novel "Rome Haul." Personally, I am not very well up on the folk history of my country, and off hand I should have been inclined to say that I was not especially keen about it, but one of the many pleasant things to be credited to this play is the fact that one does not need to be either. Its humor, its color, and its unaffected simplicity are completely disarming. Slight as it is, it creates a mood that is beautifully sustained, and it takes an immediate hold upon the affections of the spectator. Just how much Mr. Connelly had to do with it I do not know, but one seems to detect a quality of imagination somehow remotely related to that of "Green Pastures." Superficially its form is the form of realism rather than of fantasy, but actually it is delightfully fanciful nevertheless, and it has something of the innocent gaiety, of the accomplished yet never condescending sophistication, which made the charm of the earlier play.

For the benefit of those as ignorant as myself it may be said that canal-faring apparently developed a race of men and women as craft-conscious and as proud of their complicated traditions as seafaring ever did. A barge was a boat, a captain was a captain, and to journey back and forth between Albany and Detroit was to be a bold wanderer with every right to look down a bit on unadventurous folk who stayed dully at home. These "boaters" had a language and a code all their own. There were hostelries along the line where they came and went as privileged characters, and they claimed the right of the adventurous wanderer to a freedom of morals denied to mere stay-at-homes. At the very least they were "characters," and the attitude taken toward them and their rather raffish existence by our present authors is frankly if humorously romantic. Without any of the ponderousness of the professional local-colorist, they are nevertheless out to give us some sense of the picturesqueness, the color, and the quaint swagger—above all, perhaps, of the "boater's" pride in his profession and the part played in his life by a philosophy which made the Big Ditch the center of the universe, a mighty, personified phenomenon whose moods were to be regarded like the moods of the sea. What is more, our authors succeed. In their hands the day and the region become pleasantly fabulous and the story at once epic and ridiculous.

In a sense "The Farmer Takes a Wife" is robustious enough and enlivened by a great deal of very picturesque speech, but I am led to wonder whether or not anyone has ever noted the fact that Mr. Connelly is distinguished from other Broadway playwrights with whom one might tend to think of him by the fact that he is not in the least "hard-boiled." Somehow or other he has managed to escape from the tough tradition which rules our stage in so far as it is dominated by that Broadway with which he is more or less associated. His plays are never vulgar and never, like the typical product, somehow unpleasantly brassy. Below the surface of his sophistication is a delicate fancy, an essentially gentle spirit, something one would be inclined to call a kind of quaintness if it were not for the unfortunate associations of that word. It is that which in general makes the charm of his plays and that which contributes so much to "The Farmer Takes a Wife." It is romantic with a romanticism which takes one unawares, charming with a

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JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH says

DODSWORTH. Shubert Theater. Sidney Howard's beautiful dramatization of Sinclair Lewis's novel. If you did not see it last season you should this.

D'OYLY CARTE OPERA COMPANY. Gilbert and Sullivan Operas. Martin Beck Theater. English company in the best performances of the familiar operas that you are likely ever to see.

JUDGMENT DAY. Fulton Theater. Continuous and deafening excitement provided by Elmer Rice's idea of what the Reichstag fire trial would be like if it were repeated in another fascist country.

LIFE BEGINS AT 8:40. A lively, talented, amusing show with several sketches above the average. The best of them is "Chin Up,' which makes an English gentleman out of Bert Lahr. M.M.

MERRILY WE ROLL ALONG. Music Box. Ingenious, smooth, witty but rather mechanical drama about the youth of various successful men who meant when they were young to do really important things. Reveals the authors, Moss Hart and George Kaufman, in a mood rather more serious than usual.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE. Henry Miller Theater. Rough and ready entertainment with more laughs of the sort which originate below the neck than very many comedies can boast.

SMALL MIRACLE. Golden Theater. Theft, murder, and adultery in a theater lobby. For those who like thick slices of what the writers of snappy melodrama call Life.

STEVEDORE. Civic Repertory Theater. The Theater Union's incendiary but impressive melodrama of race trouble in the South.

THE DISTAFF SIDE. Booth Theater. Much charm but very little excitement provided by John van Druten's mild play about a mild English family. Dame Sybil Thorndike is the mild mother.

TOBACCO ROAD. Forrest Theater. Sub-human but fascinating behavior of the Georgia crackers.

WITHIN THE GATES. National Theater. Sean O'Caseys modern miracle play with Lillian Gish. Received with rapturous applause to which mine was not added.

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charm which one does not resent because it is insidious without being obtrusive. Broadway, I suspect, takes kindly to Mr. Connelly because he gives it romance and sentiment without quite permitting it to realize what they are. June Walker is exactly right for the girl whom even love can hardly take away from the Canal, and there is a superb characterization by the vaudeville actor Herb Williams as the itinerant dentist, veterinary, gambler, and general friend to man.

"Between Two Worlds," Elmer Rice's second play of the season, at the Belasco Theater, resembles "Judgment Day" in nothing except the fact that both have a "social purpose." The latter was unremitting melodrama in which the intellectual background was taken for granted; the new play is primarily a discussion which takes place aboard a ship bound for Europe. One of the passengers is a Russian Communist movie director; two of the others are a discontented advertising man and an equally discontented girl who has nothing to do except spend money in a vain effort to find out what she wants. The movie director is not a wholly pleasant person, and there is a moment—applauded by the audience under the mistaken notion that the argument has been ended—when the girl denounces him for lacking that kindliness, generosity, and tolerance which the members of her capitalist class can claim, even if they cannot claim anything else. In the last scene, however, he explains that he and his kind have had too much to do to cultivate the minor virtues just yet, and the animals leave the ark with the feeling that they have been reoriented toward something which may possibly be communism. The setting gives opportunity for a good many bits of that shrewd mimicry of familiar types at which Mr. Rice so excels, and the bits were good enough to make at least one spectator regret that the author has come to set as little store as he has by this remarkable gift.

A new piece by Noel Coward is usually the occasion for a debate on the subject of whether his wit is real or false. Oddly enough, it is not likely to arise in connection with the musical comedy "Conversation Piece" (Forty-fourth Street Theater) for the simple reason that it is almost completely devoid of any attempts at wit. There is, however, a good deal of very pleasantly devised pageantry of Brighton during the Regency, and there is also Yvonne Printemps, who is a whole show by herself. Few other soubrettes could carry "Conversation Piece," but she does and for her sake it is worth seeing.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Films

October Fair

IT might be possible to discover some obscure but significant principle of order running through the half-dozen films viewed during the last fortnight; but the effort would be as exhausting as it would probably be, in the last analysis, worthless. The invocation of social categories is always a possibility, and one might write: "'The Merry Widow,' at the Astor, is an example of bourgeois entertainment of the most sophisticated and decadent variety—a last gay whirl across the ice before the bitter spring thaw. 'Miracles,' at the Acme on Fourteenth Street, is, on the other hand, proletarian to the core." But immediately one is filled with dread lest such a contrast give the impression that the first picture is bad because it is bourgeois and the second good because it is proletarian. All that these terms, used without the most elaborate amplification, make possible is a kind of tiresome game of classification. They neither describe the pictures nor indicate the quality which they achieve within their own respective classes. And since even a little description is sometimes more helpful than a great deal of classification, it seems better this week to run over the list rather rapidly and without concern for any kind of order.

"The Merry Widow." For the excellence of this resuscitation from pre-Dollfuss Vienna, Lubitsch is undoubtedly most responsible. It is true that Jeannette MacDonald sings more charmingly than ever before and that Maurice Chevalier has the tact not to sing any more than is necessary. But neither of these players would be capable of carrying a picture by himself—if that can be said of any screen player—and the manner in which their personalities are used is more interesting to follow than the personalities themselves. Of Lubitsch's directorial qualities, his precise sense of the tempo of speech and action required for comedy is perhaps most noteworthy. He has had this from the beginning, and it has never been shown to better advantage. It is what eliminates the obvious from his type of screen comedy and is therefore probably the source of his well-known suavity among Hollywood directors. A word should be said of the settings, which are neither laborious nineteenth-century reconstructions nor quite recognizably *moderne,* but an impossible blend of the two which corresponds admirably with the ambiguity of mood in the picture as a whole.

"Miracles." As a full-bodied dramatic working-out of a theme this is the most satisfactory film that has come out of Soviet Russia, or anywhere else, for quite some time. The background is provincial Russia after the 1905 revolution, when the government and army, through the chauvinistic secret society called the Black Hundred, managed to divert the workers' class feelings by stirring up hatred against the Jews. As a specimen of propaganda the film must be admired for the lucidity with which it provides the one intelligible answer for the anti-Jewish movement in all countries. But it can also be admired as a piece of consistently moving drama according to any standard. Like Pudovkin in "Mother," its director has had the wisdom to pose the social problem in individual terms, to present the social issue as an emotional crisis in the life of an individual character. He is helped, to be sure, in having a superb actor for the father who unwittingly betrays his son to the reactionaries. Essentially, the film is a tragedy of human ignorance and gullibility, and this is moving in any time or place.

"The Last Gentleman." This may be interpreted as an admission of failing powers on the part of England's and America's favorite "middle-brow" actor. It is hard otherwise to explain why the producers should have staked so much on the trick mechanical device at the end. Again Mr. Arliss is to be seen as one of those eccentric and hard-driving millionaires who really turn out to be senile angels in disguise. Mr. Arliss's facility with certain kinds of effect is undeniable—but, with the passage of the years, less and less significant of anything in particular. He is the Aristides among actors and for a long time now has earned his oyster shell.

"Little Friend" and "Norah O'Neale" give little support to the rumor that the British studios have more recently been working their way out of the fog. The first takes a try at the now old-fashioned technical stunt of presenting a story through the slowly unfolding consciousness of a child. (As a device in fiction it was first used by Henry James in "What Maisie Knew" and has hardly received a rest since.) Despite some fumbling attempts at subjective photography in the opening shots, the film exhibits the invariable fault (which even James did not altogether avoid) of all efforts to employ the method—the creation of a stereotyped and over-sensational central situation for the childish consciousness to piece together. As for "Norah O'Neal," which uses a Dublin hospital and a few rural scenes as a background for a sentimental triangular romance, it is such an amateurish affair from every point of view that it leaves Ireland, as a source for screen material, as much untouched as it was before.

WILLIAM TROY

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